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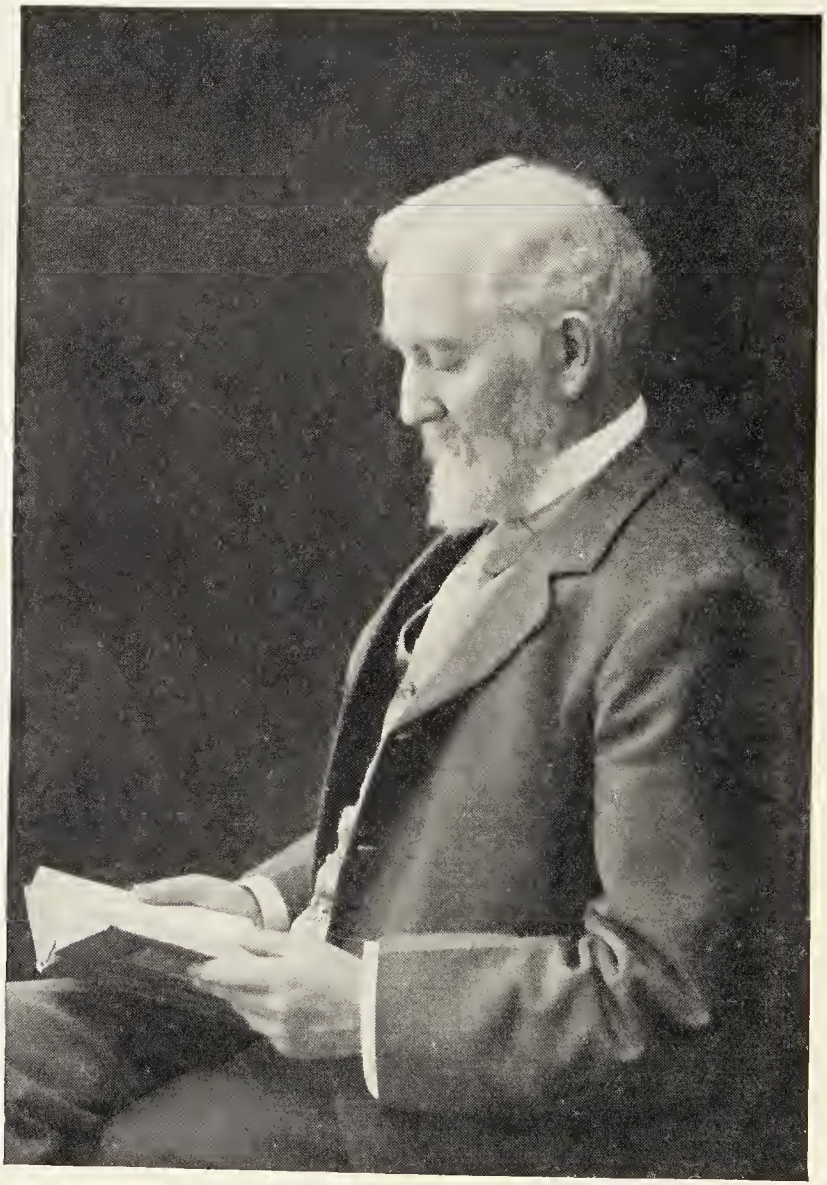

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES

TO RETURN TO ALL THAT

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BY

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES

LITT.D. DUBLIN, F.R.S.L.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	FAMILY HISTORY AND EARLY LIFE AT DUBLIN AND HOWTH	11
II	WINDERMERE	31
III	DUBLIN CASTLE	41
IV	PARKNASILLA	62
V	LATER DAYS AT PARKNASILLA	93
VI	OLD TRINITY	120
VII	LONDON AND THE PRE-RAPHAELITES	149
VIII	LIFE AS A SCHOOL INSPECTOR	171
IX	TENNYSON IN IRELAND	184
X	BACK TO MANCHESTER	196
XI	A SCHOOL INSPECTOR AT HUDDERSFIELD	207
XII	FROM HUDDERSFIELD TO SOMERSET	215
XIII	LATER DAYS AT TAUNTON	233
XIV	LONDON EDUCATION IN THE NINETIES	249
XV	NEW MOVEMENTS	261
XVI	MAINLY FAMILY	271
XVII	THE RISING GENERATION	285
XVIII	WAR	294
XIX	ROBERT GRAVES	318
XX	CONCLUSION	335
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	347

109:80

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

THE AUTHOR	*Frontispiece*		
DR. GRAVES, BISHOP OF LIMERICK	*Facing Page*		114
THE AUTHOR'S MOTHER, SELINA GRAVES, *née* CHEYNE	„	„	138
DR. ROBERT PERCIVAL GRAVES	„	„	166

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TO RETURN TO ALL THAT

CHAPTER I

FAMILY HISTORY AND EARLY LIFE

Nursery Fears – A five year old reader of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* – Banister sliding and what came of it – Memories of my father and mother, nurse and grand-aunt Tannie – Escapades with my brother Arnold – How we broke three chairs, maltreated sea-kale and hollyhocks and unsuccessfully anticipated the modern diet of raw vegetables.

My earliest recollection is falling at the age of one and a half with the back of my head on the bars of the nursery fire, and being dragged out of the fire-place by my brave little sister Helen, aged three. Our cries were heard below, and my parents and Dr. Robert Graves the physician, who was most providentially dining with them, rushed upstairs, put out the flames, and attended to my burns. I still bear the scars.

I was an imaginative and no doubt a troublesome child; when I was naughty the servants threatened to hand me over to the coal man, who would carry me away in his empty sack. This was a real terror that seemed always impending, for the great, grimy fellow bending under his weight of coal often came staggering up the staircase to pitch his load with a thundering crash into the wooden bin outside the nursery door.

Another and even more alarming nursery fear arose from my firm belief in a race of dwarfs who lived behind the wainscot and came out at nights, chattering and making faces at me when I was in bed. During a childish illness I screamed for my nurse in a fit of terror at these uncanny creatures, and she appeared with a candle to comfort me. I told her how I was being tormented, at which she snatched up the poker and disappeared with it under my bed. I heard muffled sounds of the conflict below. Finally she emerged with the joyful news that she had killed one of the dwarfs and that she was quite sure that none of the rest would ever come back again. I did not ask to see the corpse – I knew those dwarfs well enough – but concluded that she would give it a decent burial.

These early alarms were probably brought about by what I had been reading. In those days children often learned to read at what would now be considered far too tender an age. When I was about five years old, I used to steal into my father's study, darkened in his absence by the closing of the shutters to protect his books from the sun. Opening enough of one shutter to allow a single crack of light to fall upon the writing-table, I would climb the step-ladder, take down Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and open it upon the table, to the level of which my shoulders just reached. There I would stand to read, with my arms clasping the heavy volume. I believe I got through the whole of the poem without being discovered, but I must in the end have been surprised at my surreptitious studies, for I do not remember to have read any other book in this way.

The *Faerie Queene* had strange effects upon my imagination. Night after night before I went to sleep I would see the most vivid processions of knights and ladies, giants and dwarfs moving afoot or on horseback from left to right across the darkened walls of my nursery. These visions were not always pleasant ones. Often the light on the point of a spear or the jewel in a queen's crown would suddenly expand into a hideous face, which even my tightly closed eyes could not shut out. This grew larger and larger till it dominated and destroyed the whole beautiful scene. My Uncle Sandy (Alexander) Cheyne, in whose high four-poster bed I was sleeping owing to pressure on our accommodation, had to get up once in the middle of the night and pick me off the floor, on to which I had fallen in an attempt to escape from one of these terrible faces. I have had precisely the same phantasmagoria of evil faces bursting out of the darkness described to me by my daughter, Clarissa, as one of her childhood's afflictions.

My birth-place was 12 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin; a substantial house that had belonged to my grandfather, John Crosbie Graves, barrister-at-law and afterwards Chief Police Magistrate for the city. He himself was the grandson of the Rev. James Graves, vicar of Kilfinnan and Darragh in the County of Limerick, an accurate and well-read scholar with a taste for poetry.

James, who belonged to an Anglo-Irish family which had probably settled in Ireland before Cromwell's time, and was connected by tradition with the

Graves of Mickleton in Gloucestershire, had two sons, my great-grandfather Thomas, the Dean of Connor, and his younger brother Richard, Dean of Ardagh. Their father died when Richard was still young, and his brother Thomas helped him through Dublin University out of his own straitened means, with a result that justified his devotion. Richard became Regius Professor of Divinity at his University, and his work on the Pentateuch remained a theologian's classic until recent times. The Dean of Connor retired at an advanced age to Cove Cottage, Kinsale, where my father visited him as a boy, and found him gardening by day and still studying till a late hour at night.

My grandfather, John Crosbie Graves, before setting up house in Dublin, had married Helena Perceval of the Egmont family, daughter of the Rev. Charles Perceval of Templehouse, Galway, who traced his descent to a grandfather of William the Conqueror. She was in her day one of the leaders of Dublin society, and a very ambitious woman; family tradition goes that but for her injudicious attempts to push her husband, he would have reached higher legal distinctions than he did.

My father was the youngest of four brothers, all classical scholars of Dublin University, two of whom also won high Mathematical honours, and three of whom graduated as First Gold Medallists. His early education was received, along with his brothers, at a private school at Westbury-on-Trim, near Bristol. Why my grandfather sent them there I do not know –

and my father hinted to me that there was not much to be learned at the school beyond the use of the long bow and the boomerang. He was once laid low by his own boomerang, which came at him round a tree, and with bow and arrow he transfixed a schoolfellow in the distance just below the eye. The boy, to my father's agony, all but died; but strangely enough I insured my house in Taunton, years afterwards, with one of his grandsons, Mr. Hare of Bristol.

My grandfather's house was a literary and musical centre in the twenties and thirties of last century, and when it passed to my father and Uncle James the old musical tradition was kept up. As a very young child I used to lie awake listening to the singing.

My nursery was four flights up, at the head of a deep and dangerous well-staircase, through which one could look sheer down into the hall below. My grandfather, a cautious man, who had tried in vain to prevent his four boys from sliding down the formidable banisters, caused stout nets to be fixed across the gulf at each landing. They were none of them ever enmeshed, but one day rushing forth from his study on hearing a heavy fall accompanied by loud outcries, he discovered their tutor floundering in the bottom net. Having saved the young man's life, he dispensed with his services on the spot, regarding him as an unstable guide for his sons. This seems to have had a chastening effect upon young Pollock, who from this downfall rose to be a conspicuous figure on the Irish Bench.

The good effects of this fall had worn off by the

next generation, and although the nets had been removed, my brother Arnold and I continued to descend the giddy spirals in the old way. All went well for a time, for we took our joy-rides on the sly, until one unlucky morning Arnold, in his anxiety not to be late for lunch, a punishable offence, took the usual short cut and fell like a thunder-bolt upon a tray full of dishes which a maid was carrying into the dining-room. She was knocked down by the falling body, and all her dishes were broken to pieces, but she and her tray between them broke the fall and saved Arnold's life.

My dear nurse Betsy Robinson, whom I believed to have killed the dwarf, was a very handsome Westmorland woman from Bowness, whom my father and mother had brought over out of the Lake Country, after a visit there. Her little daughter, Sarah Hannah, or 'S'ranna' who was of the age of my eldest brother, grew up in our midst, becoming nurse-maid to the younger children and afterwards parlour-maid. Betsy was a devoted nurse, a woman of the highest principle, and was so much one of the family that when we grew too old to need her services as nurse, she was taken on as housekeeper and died in my father's service. She loved us all and made no favourites, and I was touched to find that she had treasured a piece of canvas work done by me as a child – a teapot worked in wool with the legend: 'The kettle must boil, the teapot be hot, or a cup of good tea can never be got.' I was surprised at this trace of such early handiwork, for throughout life my family have considered me a handless person.

I remember my father as a spare, well-proportioned man, a little below the average height but with a dignity of carriage that made him appear taller. He had that shade of blue eyes which usually goes with auburn hair. His forehead was high and dome-shaped, the nose aquiline, the mouth straight and stern, though it relaxed at times into an engaging smile. His hands were small yet capable, with long, slender fingers. He was most particular about his dress, and orderly in all his habits. Had he not been, he could not have got through anything like the amount of work which he accomplished in so many directions. He was so fine and well-grounded a scholar, that he was able to converse freely in Latin with one of the brothers Grimm whom he met while travelling on the Continent, and as an old man he would quote Homer or Plautus with equal felicity.

He was better known as a mathematician, attaining European reputation as an original discoverer. Chasles, the French geometer, acknowledged his indebtedness to him for having added greatly to the results of his own researches. It may be that his classical tastes were responsible for the elegant form in which he presented his new algebraic and geometrical formulae and theorems, which have been described as instances of the 'Poetry of Mathematics.'

He could read six or seven modern languages, and was an interested student of English Literature. He also learned to speak Modern Irish. He was the secretary to the Brehon Laws Commission, took a leading part in the translation into English of the Old

Irish Brehon Laws, made important discoveries about the authorship of the Book of Armagh, and was for long the leading authority on Oghams, the early Irish cryptic inscriptions which Brash and other Irish antiquaries had entirely misinterpreted.

He was a founder of the Trinity College Choral Society; played cricket for the Phoenix Club and for his own University; was an expert trout and salmon fisher, taking great pleasure in tying his own flies; and I well remember when he was fifty years of age his making a standing jump of nine feet and a running one of fifteen, in company with Lord Dunraven, on the top of the Kerry mountains. No wonder that as a younger man he had jumped across the 'ha-ha,' a ditch filled with water that then ran down the middle of Trinity College Park, a good eighteen feet from edge to edge.

When we were little children our greatest treat was to sit round him while he told us fairy stories; but when business began to press too hard upon him we lost this pleasure, and were bitterly disappointed not to hear the end of one of his stories for which we petitioned over and over again, but in vain. The hero had been left on the top of a tree from which he was just stepping out into a beautiful strange country. Later on he made amends by reading aloud to us from Tennyson and other English poets. A particular impression was made upon my mind by the cadences of his voice when reading *The Lotus Eaters*.

My mother was the eldest daughter of Doctor John Cheyne of Glasgow, one of the most capable

physicians of his day and indeed, till his last illness, Physician General to the Forces in Ireland. Her mother was a Macartney, daughter of the Vicar of Antrim, a notable Northern loyalist. Tall for those days, she was a great contrast to my father. She had abundant dark hair, arched eyebrows, Irish eyes, grey-blue with dark lashes; a straight nose, rather full lips, and a beautiful complexion. Her tastes were both artistic and musical, pleasant links between her and my father. She was a high-spirited woman and of a quick temper. When things went wrong in the house, we were made aware of it by her fits of what in the nursery was known as 'East Wind,' and made us careful to keep out of her way. Yet she was a devoted wife and mother, proud of the achievements of her husband and children. She bore the long and trying illness which eventually carried her off in the most patient and heroic manner, returning home after receiving her death sentence, and carrying on her duties with the same bright spirit as before.

My father was comfortably off in those early times, and kept a good table, my mother proving an excellent housekeeper. There were then only four children, Jack, Helen, Arnold and myself. Jack was an adventurous spirit, and especially fond of gun-powder and its various applications. This was the time of the Burmese war, and we built Burmese towers of bricks to be assaulted and demolished, and made fleets of Chinese junks and other strange vessels out of old newspapers, destroying them with peashooters and toy cannon. Our outdoor exercise chiefly consisted

of running games with other children in Fitzwilliam Square, and in bear fighting in the garden and coach house, into whose windows we climbed by the branches of a laburnum tree. We were kept hard at our lessons under a German governess, Fraülein Walter, a good-natured, well-meaning, dumpy young woman who taught us thoroughly. But her wonderful paper folding and flower making was what appealed to us most.

She was not, however, an engaging personality, and my general recollection of her is limited, but there was one black-letter day which I am not likely to forget. In her absence Arnold and I were riding two chairs against one another. Just as she returned to the room, there was a crash. Arnold's mount had successfully broken the back of mine. Knowing how particular my mother was about the use of her furniture, Fraülein Walter blazed out, and after boxing our ears, told us to keep quiet and read. I stood up on the back of another chair to reach a book down from the book-case in the corner, when crash! went the second chair-back. Quite furious at this, Fraülein chased me round and round the table at full speed.

But Arnold, out of brotherly sympathy, put a chair in her way, and over this she fell heavily, breaking the third chair-back. At this magnetic moment my mother entered. She found Fraülein weeping on the floor, and observing the wrecks of no less than three chairs, demanded an explanation. This poor Fraülein gave in voluble German, with which my mother was none too familiar. We were all blown sky-high, after

which my mother retired to consider the situation with my father.

He was an adept in making the punishment fit the crime, and he decreed that the chair-backs should not be mended but sawn off neatly, and in that truncated condition used in the schoolroom. Worse than this, Arnold and I were compelled to carry our two to the dining-room for meals for I forget how long; but they were considered too ungainly for use in the drawing-room, where we had to sit on the carpet. I was once much mortified when my mother apologised to a visitor for our peculiar position, and accounted for it at painful length.

Very different from Fraülein Walter, and very dear to us, was our grand-aunT Annie, shortened into Tannie. She was an old lady of perfect manners, but invariably appeared in a dingy black dress surmounted by a little black cap with white frills, and would allude to herself playfully as 'Fairy Fright.' She had been a beautiful girl, but had been disfigured at the age of sixteen by the smallpox, and seemed to have grown careless of her appearance ever after. She would never appear when visitors were present unless they were old friends of the family.

We loved Tannie, partly no doubt because she spoilt us, softening my mother's edges; partly because of her family stories, and the pains she took over our verses. One story of hers in which we rejoiced concerned her father, the Dean of Connor. He did not wish to appear unsociable at a great County Kerry Hunt dinner at which wine flowed freely, so after

finishing his self-imposed ration of two glasses, he merely sipped subsequent ones and emptied them secretly into his high Wellington boots. When the rest of the company were prostrate under the table, a usual happening in those days, he squelched quietly out of the room.

Tannie's greatest pride was in the memory of her sister Arabella, artist, poetess, and one of the reigning beauties in the Ireland of her day. She never took any of her many admirers seriously, calling one of them 'Sigh-on, King of the Amorites,' and another 'Hog, King of Basin.' She died unmarried, after which Tannie, who had lived with her for years, came to us.

Amongst the family friends at this time were John Ball, afterwards President of the Alpine Club; Lord Dunraven, the grand-uncle of the present Peer; Sir Thomas Larcom, the Irish Secretary and his wife; Augustus Maunsell; a young engineer officer of the name of Greenwood; the Joys, Wallaces, Blackburns, Gales, Lloyds and Stanfords. My Uncle James, who had lived with us when I was a little boy, had married Miss Georgina Lees, Aunt Georgie, an overwhelmingly funny woman of whose tongue my mother stood in dread, and set up with her elsewhere. A Kriegspiel conducted on the dining-room table was a favourite amusement of ours. The military expert was young Greenwood, and my father, Uncle James, my brother Jack, and John Stanford, the father of Sir Charles Stanford the musician, were the chief belligerents. Small but effective toy cannon charged with shot were manipulated by the Seniors – the young people

having to be content with pea-shooters. A well-directed or lucky shot would often bring down a whole line of soldiers in close order, and so 'open order' was adopted.

One evening after dinner, when the table had been cleared, a battle royal took place. For this John Stanford had surreptitiously provided a cannon of such alarmingly high calibre that it blew out the gas. When this was relighted, the opposing forces were found, to the astonishment of all, to be still intact. What had become of the charge was not realised until long afterwards when my father, meditatively fingering the edge of the table over his wine, found it lodged under the rim.

John Stanford had been provided, as a special constable during the Rising of 1848, with bombs to defend his Dublin house from the rebels, should occasion arise. Much to his disappointment it did not, for he had been most anxious to see the result of a good bomb explosion. Rising or no Rising, he determined to gain the experience. One quiet afternoon when he had got everyone else out of the house on some pretext or other, he threw the bomb into the area. There was an explosion which alarmed the whole neighbourhood, blew in all the windows at the back of the house, and caused other considerable damage.

Stanford was a magnificent-looking man, six foot four in height. He was a good actor, a great loss to the stage as a *bravura* singer, and had a faculty for making faces for which we greatly respected him. But he was an erratic person, and his temper was not

always to be relied upon. He fell out with my mother, and was so rude to her on one occasion that a separation lasting several years, took place between the two families, much to the distress of Mrs. Stanford, a woman of the most peaceable disposition who had been before her marriage a 'Henn' of 'Paradise.'

My admiration for the opposite sex was shown at an early age. I was only seven or eight years old when I fell a victim to the pretty face, flowered frock, frilled white pantaloons, white silk stockings and neat little sandalled feet of Miss Blanche Lecky, the sister of William Hartpole Lecky, the historian. We met in Fitzwilliam Square and elsewhere, walking and playing together. I made her a true-love offering of a bunch of paper flowers – roses, pinks, and pirus japonica – and proposed elopement in some stanzas which began:

'Blanche, dearest, fly with me
Far o'er the raging sea.'

But she made no response to the invitation, and I had to console myself elsewhere.

The next girl whose eyes were to burn a hole in my heart – and a very fine pair of black eyes they were – was 'Mungo,' Miss Mary MacDougall. This was at Howth, whither we had removed from Dublin for a year or two in consequence of my father's delicate health, brought about by overwork. Mungo's father, Mr. William MacDougall, was our nearest neighbour, his house not being more than a quarter of a mile from the Tansy Cottage in which we found ourselves. Mungo was her father's favourite. She was about ten

years old, and she and her elder sisters Bessie and Fanny – afterwards the wife of Sir John Mahaffy 'Provost of Trinity'– and her young brother William, alias 'Bucko,' were our special friends and companions. One day Arnold, Bucko, Mungo and I were prospecting in the MacDougall kitchen garden which lay ten feet below a terrace walk approached by a flight of stone steps. We decided then and there that a large bed of seakale was no longer of any use for the table, and would be a delightfully soft landing-place to alight upon from the top of the ten-foot wall. Mungo quite concurred, but did not share in our exhilarating leaps on to the accommodating seakale below, which continued till the angry voice of Mr. MacDougall called out to us, just as I saw six-year-old Bucko almost turn a somersault in the air as he came tumbling down upon us.

'What do you mean, you young blackguards, by ruining my fine bed of seakale?' he cried –'get ye gone, ye little upstarts, and never let me see your faces again!'

We fled incontinently. Capless, collarless, beltless, shoeless, we escaped over the wall that separated the MacDougall's ground from ours. Giving one last look behind, we discovered the traitress Mungo grinning beside her father. She had taken alarm when she realised the devastation we were creating in her father's garden, and had called him in to stop it. My feelings for Mungo underwent a swift change, and her black eyes never again burned their way beyond my waistcoat buttons.

But the situation was a serious one, for on that very evening there was to be a long-looked-for children's party at the MacDougalls, to be followed by fireworks and the letting off of a fire ballon. We rushed in to tell our mother of Mungo's perfidy, and of the bad names her father had called us. She did not give us much consolation, but acted promptly. She sat down to write a full letter of apology to Mr. MacDougall, and said that her children had spoilt his seakale out of sheer ignorance, but that they would be well punished by not going to the party to which they had so long looked forward. She then gave it to our manservant John to deliver, and told him at the same time to collect the derelict articles of our clothing.

John, who was a good friend of ours, was wise in his own generation. He had not been asked to wait for an answer, but he did. It came in a reply from Mrs. MacDougall, saying that 'William was of course greatly put out, and perhaps forgot himself too much in what he said to your children, but the sun never goes down upon his wrath, and he hopes that you will let the young monkeys come to our party this evening.' So we went, and enjoyed ourselves hugely.

Arnold and I had further trouble with members of the vegetable kingdom. One day we surveyed our own garden with the air of connoisseurs, and decided after much deliberation that certain rank flowering plants must be weeds, and should, therefore, be destroyed. They were quite too ugly to be flowers; besides, they occupied more room than they were worth. Pulling them up by the roots would have

taken far too much trouble, so we took off our belts and started beating them to the ground.

'What are you doing there, boys?' came my father's voice from his study window which looked out on the garden. 'Destroying some ugly weeds'– 'Hand me up one of those weeds!' I held up the tallest of them to him. He leant out of the window and drew it into the study, adding, 'Now come up here and I'll teach you the difference between hollyhocks and weeds.' And he did so, giving us the same treatment with the hollyhocks as we had given them with our belts.

Our garden was an old-fashioned one, providing all the vegetables needed for the dining-room table and all the flowers we could desire for filling the drawing-room. We boys made surreptitious excursions into it at odd times when we felt hungry between meals. With our pocket knives we pared raw carrots and turnips, and then chumped them with a keen enjoyment which I still retain for that form of raw provender, highly recommended now-a-days by the latest hygienic food experts. On going in one day to what we called early dinner I saw to my surprise a covered dish in front of my empty plate, and when Grace had been said my mother observed, 'There is something for you under that cover, Alfred, of which I know you are very fond.' A covered dish up to this time had always meant some special dainty for an invalid member of the family, a chop or cutlet, or fricasseed chicken. I lifted the cover eagerly, and found a large helping of raw mutton, raw potatoes, and a considerable assortment of my favourite raw carrots

and turnips. If my hot tears of mortification could have stewed that raw mutton, they would have done so.

There were other forbidden forms of what my mother called 'garbage,' such as the various kinds of sorrel, and above all, blackberries, against which there was a special ban, as it was believed that we would not eat them with sufficient discrimination to avoid the maggots. We often shunned our mother's company for fear lest our stained hands should betray us.

But on such occasions we dreaded meeting my father even more. He invariably asked us to put out our tongues and then sternly remarked, 'You've been eating blackberries, boys,' and we were deprived of sugar and jam at tea. It never struck us that the colour of our tongues had betrayed us to him. Our firm conviction was that he possessed some uncanny power of diagnosing the contents of our stomachs.

Arnold and I had been engaged one morning in filling a couple of cabbage leaves with blackberries for a private dessert of our own after early dinner, when the bell rang. To be late for a meal was to be punished, so we raced for the hall door from 'Bramble-rock,' but saw my father and mother coming downstairs as we reached it. They passed into the dining-room first. Arnold managed to secrete his blackberries in a safe place, but I slipped my cabbage leaf, blackberries and all, under the mat in front of the dining-room door. I was just in time for Grace, and then the parlourmaid 'S'ranna' fell headlong into the room with a large meat-dish containing a leg of mutton. The dish was broken to pieces, we were squirted with the gravy, and the

leg of mutton rolled under the table. The poor girl was scolded roundly for being such a stupid, awkward creature, and burst into tears, crying, 'There was something slippery under the mat 'M, and I couldn't help falling.' Alas! The dislocation of the dining-room mat betrayed an immense green and purple mess smeared all over the threshold. It was obvious that either Arnold or I was the delinquent, so I owned up, and was thrashed by my father. After this experience I was content to eat blackberries cooked.

But Arnold ventured once more into the field of raw vegetables. A boy came begging down the road to our backyard as we were passing. 'Give us something to ate, for the love of God,' he cried, 'I'm starvin'.'

'Why are your eyes so red?' enquired Arnold, 'Are you the beggar boy the cook says rubs his eyes with onions to make them look as if he had ophthalmy?'

'Yerra, young master! Would I be such a fool as to put an onion into my eye when I wanted it so badly for my belly?'

'Would you eat a raw onion, then?' said Arnold.

'Try me!' said the boy. But we couldn't make the experiment then, as the vegetable garden was closed to us.

'Could you eat a raw potato?' Arnold went on.

'I would that, sir, an' willin'.'

So we rushed off, and asked the cook for a raw potato which we then gave to the boy. He bravely munched a bit of it to our great surprise, for we had

tried the raw potato and found it inexpressibly nasty. Believing now that he was really starving, we returned to the kitchen and induced the cook to give him a proper meal.

About this time we paid a family visit to my Uncle John and Aunt Amelia at Thirlestaine Lodge, Cheltenham. Failing to induce the Mickleton Graves' heiress to accept him and thus rejoin the English and Irish branches of the family, my Uncle had, as it was cruelly said, mis-took Miss Tooke, a clever and monied but crabbed member of the Horne Tooke family. After distinguishing himself as a writer on mathematical and classical subjects and becoming a law professor at University College, London, to which he afterwards left his priceless mathematical library, my uncle had settled down, as a Poor Law Inspector at Cheltenham in a fine house with a beautiful garden. Of the latter I have one vivid memory. Carried by curiosity into a corner of it, banned because my Aunt's bees were kept there, I realised the truth of Gilbert's Limerick in which a sufferer from a supposed bee sting on being asked 'Does it buzz?' replies 'No it doesn't, It's a regular brute of a hornet.' That my stinger certainly was, though why it should have thus mounted guard for the bees I have always thought strange. Four hornet stings have always been thought to be mortal for a human being. Fortunately my hornet was single, and so I escaped with my life.

CHAPTER II

WINDERMERE

Our Somnambulist School fellow – Mr. Puckle's 'jaws' to the School – Moshyou Struwell's way of keeping order – Mr. Selby Lowndes as a rounders target – 'Hell-cat' and her favourite invalid and how we dosed him – How I broke my arm – Famous Windermerians including Percy French.

ARNOLD and I had been intended for Cheltenham College, at which our elder brother, Jack, had obtained a scholarship, but my father had been unfortunate in his investments. So we were sent to a much less expensive school, Windermere College, the headmaster of which was Mr. George Hale Puckle, for whose mathematical attainments my father had a high respect. He was, also, a friend and neighbour of my uncle, Robert Perceval Graves, who had become curate of Windermere through the influence of his friend, the poet Wordsworth.

At the early ages of nine and ten we two boys took what appeared to us an interminable journey by sea to Liverpool and thence by very slow train to Windermere. The College was quite close to the station, and consisted of a fine main building with a tower at one end of it in which the boys suffering from infectious sicknesses were quartered, and the two-storied, ivy-mantled 'Schools' at a little distance from it.

Folk-song collectors invariably find old people's memories so faulty at first that they can remember few of the songs they sang in their youth. But, by the next visit, they have 'minded' another old song or ballad. Their dormant musical memories, once stirred, begin to work again half unconsciously, until, line by line, verse by verse, the long forgotten song or ballad rises to their recollection, and they are only too eager to have them recorded by pencil or phonograph before they slip back into oblivion.

In the same way when, seventy years after our entry into Windermere College which I have never revisited, I first tried to remember my old masters and school-fellows, not a dozen of these came to my mind. Very gradually, however, names and faces so asserted themselves that I was able to write down over a hundred of them. These began to suggest incidents in my short school life at Windermere.

I see myself as a small boy seated at the breakfast table on the dais of the dining-hall eating a plain breakfast and watching covetously the slow demolition one after the other of three eggs by young Dransfield, a huge North-Country boy with a slow, self-satisfied smile. Dransfield kept hens, and was entitled by the school regulations to eat his own eggs at breakfast and tea.

I next recognise myself in 'The Little Room,' occupied by the younger boys, who had chosen me as the bard and story-teller of the dormitory.

Ward and Potter, both from the North of Ireland, slept near me. Quite a romance attached to Ward,

a pale, wistful-faced little fellow. We noticed that he did not prepare his lessons regularly over night but was always ready with them in the morning. This struck us as strange, and we finally decided to watch him closely. Potter and another boy were detailed for the task. They reported next morning that Ward had got up quite quietly in the middle of the night, dressed, lit a candle, gone downstairs to his locker in the schoolroom below, unlocked it, taken out his books, and sat down to his table. There he worked at and finished his sums and prepared his Latin Grammar with great rapidity. He then put his books carefully back and returned to our bedroom, where he undressed, put out his candle, and went back to bed.

During the whole of this performance the two witnesses declared that Ward's eyes were staring strangely, that he breathed as if in sleep, and that his movements were unnaturally noiseless. Convinced that this was a case of somnambulism we reported it to the authorities, who put Ward into the doctor's hands. He was never known to sleep-walk again, and was, therefore, compelled to prepare his lessons in the normal way. Had Potter and the other boy romanced about Ward or not?

One of the occupants of the 'Little Room' was a boy called Newton, a favourite of the matron, Mrs. Stapleton, whom we called 'Hell-cat,' but whom I now recognise as the worthy widow of General Stapleton of Crimean fame. Newton was constantly allowed to remain in bed or stay indoors unnecessarily. So one night when he had gone to sleep rather early after one

of his so-called headaches, we decided to take his medical treatment into our own hands. I was dressed up to resemble Mrs. Stapleton as closely as possible and told off to administer a considerable dose of mixed tooth-powder and water, to which we all contributed small items. I took the tumbler with its contents to Newton's bedside and, imitating Hell-cat's voice to the best of my ability, shook him by the shoulder saying, 'Wake up, my boy, it's time to take your medicine.' He was so well accustomed to respond to these invitations that he did so at once, and swallowed down quite half a tumbler of our dreadful decoction. Strangely enough there were no serious consequences. In the morning we said to him, 'You must have been bad last night for the Hell-cat to have taken the trouble to come all the way upstairs to dose you.' He gravely accepted the compliment.

Our head-master, Mr. Puckle, was a man of about fifty, well set up, with a good forehead, keen eyes, firm nose and chin, rubicund complexion, incisive voice and alert movements. He taught mathematics, his special subject, efficiently to the upper classes, and if somewhat severe was recognised as just; his 'jaws' to the school not only kept us in order but were greatly enjoyed, for they abounded in biting sarcasm, generally relating to some unusual act of delinquency, such as rabbiting in the wood which was 'out of bounds,' or bathing in the lake without supervision, which led in one case to fatal results.

I did not rise high enough in the school to receive any teaching from Mr. Puckle.

What little Latin and less Greek I learnt at Windermere was badly and carelessly taught, and I can say the same of the teaching of the modern languages. Our French and German master – 'Moshyou Stroovell,' might really have come out of 'Struwell Peter.' He was a dark, fiercely moustached, thick-set Alsatian with an imperfect knowledge of English, a pet canary, and no power of keeping order except with the cane, or with a ferrule which he threw with great accuracy at the heads of offenders. In self-protection we would put up the lids of our desks, and the ferrule would ricochet across the room, occasionally smashing a window. This provided him with opportunities for the exercise of acts of skill for which we greatly admired him. If he noticed us employed upon anything that did not concern our French or German studies – such as an apple, a Brazil nut, or even a bunch of keys – he would not confiscate it, but with beautiful certainty pitch it out of the window through one of those broken diamond panes. Once he had thus pitched a turnip watch and chain into outer space, and the good old watch, which had stopped for some time past, was found ticking away gaily.

On winter half-holidays, we played what is now called 'Soccer,' and in the summer, cricket. We played rounders on occasions, also, in a corner of the school ground well away from the playing fields, and I seem to see our Divinity master, the Rev. Selby Lowndes, father-in-law of Mrs. Belloc-Lowndes the novelist, running for a rounder after a hard smack into the country, hatless, coatless and collarless, when

a splendid throw in to the wicket-keeper enabled him to fetch the reverend gentleman a tremendous crack with the ball on his immense fundament when he was within ten yards of home. He took the roar of delight from the fielding side with magnificent good humour.

Pole jumping is an exercise in which the North of England excels, and Longmire, the great Westmorland professional pole-jumper of that day, was in his prime. He was able to clear a bar at eleven feet without climbing up the pole with his hands, a manœuvre exploited now-a-days. The best pole-jumpers in our time did not place the left hand under the right when they gripped the pole, but held it with the knuckles of both hands on top, and it would have been impossible to have climbed a pole with their fists in this position.

As a boy of twelve, Arnold cleared eight feet and could jump across a quarry twenty feet in width. When he entered Trinity College, Dublin, never having pole-jumped in the interval, he again took up the sport and won the pole-jumping competition at Dublin University Sports, four years in succession, winning also all the College hurdle races during that period, from the 120 yards race to the 660 yards Steeple Chase.

In his Trinity days Arnold and the eldest Bland used to go for long cross-country runs through Kerry. They came one afternoon to a high wall with what seemed to be small fir-trees peeping over, and Bland dared Arnold to jump it. Arnold had a curious habit of turning over in the air and facing the ground. When

in mid flight, he saw to his horror that what had appeared from the other side to be small saplings, were the tops of immense trees forty or fifty feet in height, and that there was a sheer drop over the wall on to jagged rocks below. He instinctively put out his hands, clutched the wall as he skimmed over it, and so saved himself. He made light of the danger afterwards, but Bland had a violent reaction, and felt queer for a day or two.

We had a good gymnasium at Windermere, and Arnold gained much by it physically. I should probably have derived almost equal benefit, but for an unfortunate accident which befell me during football. At half-time it was usual for the more energetic boys to wrestle till the game was resumed. On the day in question I wrestled with a boy known as the 'Astronomer,' his name being Newton, though he did not claim descent from the great Sir Isaac, and was unrelated to the Hell-cat's favourite. After a severe struggle I pitched the Astronomer, who was rather a heavy weight, over my shoulder and on to my left arm. Nursing the arm, I returned to school and sat down at my seat at the top table which was being prepared for tea, fainted, and came to in the matron's room. Dr. Clowes was sent for and pronounced the arm out of joint, tugged at it till he seemed satisfied, and then bandaged it. But I was far from satisfied, nor was my uncle Robert, who fortunately came to visit us on the following day and found me in great agony. He took the law into his own hands, carried me off to Dove Nest, and called

in a bone-setter. He recognised where the bone was broken, but in setting it, which he did after a great struggle owing to the swollen condition of my arm, he did it a fresh injury, tearing the sinews at the elbow. I continued so poorly that my uncle sent me home to Dublin, and there I heard Robert Smith, the most famous Irish surgeon of his day, inveighing against 'those English butchers who had spoilt the boy's arm for life through their ignorance of how to treat a case of Colles's fracture.' 'I'd break the arm again and set it properly,' he said to my father, 'but I don't think the boy could stand it.' And so I have gone through life with a weak and crooked left arm.

I was now able to do little in the gynasium, and I never could bat freely; but I went on playing Soccer at school, and managed to get into the hockey and Rugger teams at Old Trinity some six years later.

Robert, the Windermere College manservant, was a great favourite of ours, and we loved to chaff him and be chaffed by him. He was a powerful Westmorland man with a curly head of thick black hair, a bold, mischievous face, and a considerable corporation. When helping to lay the tables in the dining-hall, Robert was often at a disadvantage. While he was getting rid of the plates at a furious rate, we were employed in peppering him through our pea-shooters. One pea took such serious effect in his eye that he dashed down a pile of plates exclaiming, 'I'll never do nothing for none of you, never no more, no, not for nobody!'– But he did.

While in the middle school, whose quarters were

called 'Olympus,' I competed for a prize offered for the best poem on 'Ruth.' I came in second for it, a bad second I should imagine, if the only couplet of my composition that I recollect is a fair sample. This relates to the delicate situation caused by the awakening of Boaz in the middle of the night to find Ruth lying at his feet.

'As Boaz from his pillow raised his head,
He heard a respiration by his bed.'

I had a pianoforte lesson once a week, and though I received a copy of Rossini's *Stabat Mater* one year as the school Music Prize, the money spent on my piano-playing was entirely thrown away. I did hardly any practising during the week for my music master, Mr. Smallwood, and he certainly took up far too much of my half-hour's lesson with descriptions of his own musical achievements. Smallwood had a long sallow face, long wiry hair, and very long coat-tails, and was generally engaged in sucking malodorous cough-lozenges. He once showed me a recently published list of musical pieces for schools including some of his own. These were marked 'Easy,' 'Rather Difficult,' 'Difficult,' and 'Very Difficult,' and he pointed out to me with quiet pride that all Smallwood's compositions were at any rate described as difficult.

Some few of the boys who were at school with me distinguished themselves in after-life. 'Long' Kennedy became a leading member of the Alpine Club, and rose to its Presidency. 'Henn' Holmes became an historian. Harry Grenfell lived to be a well-known Admiral, and Lionel Lewin wrote clever lyrics to Sir

Arthur Sullivan's music. Sinkinson took first place at the Indian Civil Service Examination, and was promising highly as an Indian administrator when his career was cut short by premature death.

When writing an introduction to the Prose Poems and Parodies of my friend Percy French, I found that he too had been at Windermere College.

He was a very clever boy in many directions – as a story-teller, as a talker, an actor and an artist, and even took so readily to instruction in Euclid that his father determined to make him an engineer. Young French was poorly grounded at Windermere and was wisely withdrawn for further instruction in Ireland.

But his peculiar gifts had begun to assert themselves at Windermere. He found Prep. 'a quiet time when he could write scurrilous rhymes and draw caricatures of the masters,' and had his ears boxed for scribbling on his atlas:

'O, Scaggerack,
Why look so black?'
So spake the Cattegat.
'I've got the sack,'
Said the Scaggerack,
'Because my nose is flat.'

CHAPTER III

DUBLIN CASTLE

Life in the Deanery – An escape from asphyxiation – Sleeping inside a clock – Dowsing a general officer – Making April Fools of the Castle Guard – Famous preachers in the Chapel Royal. – Archbishop Whateley and the aide-de-camp – The curate's wife with twenty-three children and Lord Normanby.

When my father was appointed Dean of the Chapel Royal in 1860, he withdrew Arnold and myself from Windermere, where he did not think we were making reasonable progress, and put us under a classical and a mathematical tutor at home. They were conscientious teachers, and we were not idle, but I was backward in Mathematics and Arnold in Classics. We therefore ran badly in harness. The greater part of our spare time was passed by ourselves; but fortunately we did not suffer too seriously from want of playfellows. We had learnt to go on stilts and became adepts at it, walking and even hopping up and down the stone steps that led from the Vice-Regal quarters to the garden at the back of Dublin Castle. We used to charge up and down this garden, hoping on one stilt and using the free one as a lance with which to unstilt each other.

We amused ourselves also by climbing the roofs

of the houses occupied by the Vice-Regal Court in the Upper Castle Yard and walking along their ridges and gutters. This required a clear head and good balance, and it is a wonder how Arnold, who excelled at this giddy pastime, escaped from it with a whole skin.

When we first went to the Deanery we were put to sleep in a room on the ground floor which was without a fireplace or a window, but opened into another bedroom occupied by our married servants, Mr. and Mrs. Meares. The door of their room was naturally kept locked after they had passed to bed through ours. Unless, therefore, its outer door was left regularly open, the air of our room tended to become exhausted. We awoke panting for breath one night, struggled with difficulty to the door in the dark, opened it with much effort, and fell into the hall crying for help. My father and mother came downstairs in alarm and carried us up into the drawing-room. Here we were given copious draughts of hartshorn and water and put to sleep on two sofas for the rest of the night. Arnold was the worst sufferer, not completely recovering his powers of respiration for a couple of years, but I was all right again in a day or two.

After this adventure we could not use the same bedroom again, and a substitute had to be found. This was a small room immediately under the great clock that surmounted the Deanery. What with its window and the deep aperture through which the immense pendulum swung to and fro beneath our beds, it was airy enough. But it was a noisy and

uncanny bedroom, though in course of time I got just as well accustomed to it as I did a dozen years later to a louder accompaniment, when I had a room in London Street, Paddington, immediately over the Metropolitan Railway line, and was rumbled to sleep by the late trains.

The huge weight which the pendulum swung backwards and forwards immediately over our winding well-staircase respected us during University term-time, but one summer when we had all gone off to Kerry, it broke away and crashed right through the staircase into the hall below.

Bottled up as we were at Dublin Castle, with a gravel-walked croquet lawn as our only playground, small wonder that we became *enfants terribles* to the Lord Lieutenant and his court. Captain Williams, the Comptroller, was a good-hearted, but irascible Welshman with two of whose beautiful daughters, Gwendoline and Kathleen, now the Duchess of Wellington, we were most intimate. They enjoyed the excitement of our roof-climbing pranks, and Kathleen gave us access to their roof by a ladder in one of the attics.

Andrew Cockerell, the Court wit, of whom it was said that he lay late in bed preparing jokes with which he afterwards made the table roar, was humorously tolerant of our boyish escapades. Whilst taking his ease in his bedroom one morning he heard two Irish housemaids talking in the long passage outside. 'Now, Biddy,' said one of them, 'What is the manin' of the notice I seen outside about a Charity Ball that was bein' given for some Sassiety with the quarest of

names? "The Sick and Indignant Room-Keepers' Sassiety" I think it was. That Mr. Andrew Cockerell in there should belong to it, for though I think it's only pertend sickness that has him keepin' his room so late in the mornin', indignant always he is, and more nor that, when we taps at tin or elivin o'clock at his door to make sure he hasn't cleared out of it, and he's there all the time.'

'Listen to ye now for an ignorant woman that ye are,' answered her friend, 'The Room-Keepers, they're going to dance for, are poor ould alms-men and women, and the name they put on them is "The Sick and Indigent Room-Keepers' Sassiety." But I own I wanst made as big a mistake myself about one of thim Sassieties – no, it was a Charity. For I writes home to me mother, "Isn't Dublin the quare place for the names it does be puttin' on everyone, small and great?" Would you believe it, there's a Charity called "The Conquered Atom Fund." But when I saw it wrote down in print it was "The Concordatum Fund," a grand-looking word entirely, though I niver could make out the manin' of it.'

Biddy had unconsciously said a good thing about the habit Dublin possessed in those days of finding nick-names for people. Besides Cockerell, the 'sick and indignant room-keeper,' both Court Physicians had received nick-names. One Court Physician would have been enough, but there were two Dr. Hugheses in Dublin at the time, of equal ability but very different dispositions. The letter of appointment to the post of Court Physician went to the cantankerous Dr. Hughes,

in mistake for the courteous one, and could not be revoked. A solution for the difficulty was found by sending a second letter of appointment to the better-mannered Dr. Hughes, and the two Irish Court Physicians were at once dubbed 'Silky' and 'Sulky.' That red-haired and rugged Viceroy, Earl Spencer, was later on called 'The Red Cross Knight.' The severity of this nick-name was softened, however, by the description of his beautiful Countess as 'Spenser's Faerie Queene.'

My father, who besides being Dean of the Chapel Royal was Dean of Clonfert, did not in company with his friend Dr. Alexander, afterwards Archbishop of Armagh, escape from this form of Dublin humour. Dr. Alexander was appointed Dean of Emly about the time that my father was made Dean of Clonfert, and some incorrigible punster called attention to the curious conjunction – 'The Dean 'o can flirt with Em'ly.' But perhaps the best clerical joke of the kind related to Dr. Robert Daly, Bishop of Cashel, who was not too popular in his diocese, for the riddle was propounded: 'Why are the Cashel clergy the most poorly paid, and yet the most contented, in Ireland?' the answer being: 'They have only one Bob Daly amongst them, and would never ask for another.'

We indulged in two practical jokes at the expense of the military quartered in Dublin Castle. Our work-room was beneath our bedroom in the Clock Tower, which adjoined the military quarters of the castle guard. Backwards and forwards along the pavement from the castle gates which led into the Upper Castle

Yard tramped with fixed bayonet one sentry after another from morning to night and from night to morning. This incessant tramp going on underneath annoyed us and at last provoked us to action. We fetched down our water-jugs and, making a careful calculation, emptied them on the sentry's head. An angry outcry from below satisfied us that we had made good practice on the red-coat. Bursting with laughter, we fled for refuge to our room in the clock-tower and bolted ourselves in. There was a considerable interval of silence, and then came a loud and prolonged hammering at our front door. We looked at one another anxiously. In a few minutes we heard our father's voice calling out from the study, 'Boys, where are you?' We came out of hiding to learn that it was no ordinary sentry whom we had soused from head to foot, but the general himself, who, being on a round of garrison inspection, had paid a surprise visit to the Upper Castle Guard, and had himself received the surprise of his life at our hands.

'Strange treatment, sir,' he had said to my father, 'for Her Majesty's uniform' – indicating the state of it – 'to have pailfuls of slops emptied upon it from your Deanery window.' 'But,' we protested, 'it was quite clean water out of our jugs.' 'No matter,' said my father, 'I never felt more ashamed of you in my life.'

'I fear, Mr. Dean,' the general had gone on, 'You are not strict enough with your young rascals, for they were seen by the captain of the guard grinning out of the window after this unpleasant incident. Unless you undertake to give those boys the severe

thrashing they deserve, I shall consider it my duty to report the whole affair to His Excellency.' I drop a veil over what followed.

But we had our revenge. On the first of April, after making April fools of our brothers and sisters, and some of our seniors, we conceived the idea of doing the same by the Upper Castle Guard. Passing without challenge a pair of sentries who kept guard over the main entrance to the Vice-Regal quarters, we strolled into St. Patrick's Hall. After an interval we returned, and I announced to one of the sentries, 'His Excellency would be obliged if you would inform the Commanding Officer that it is his pleasure that the Guard should parade in the Upper Castle Yard at four o'clock.' The sentry saluted, and we waited eagerly till the appointed hour. Sure enough, the guard turned out with their two buglers, and went through the entire military performance, although a heavy storm had come on and it was raining cats and dogs all through the parade, with a result quite as damaging to all their uniforms as the emptying of our water-jugs had been to the general's.

That evening the officer in command and his subaltern dined with Lord Carlisle. In the course of it the captain of the guard observed how unfortunate it was that the weather had spoilt the effect of the parade His Excellency had called for. '*I* call for it!' exclaimed Lord Carlisle, 'How you can say that, I cannot understand. I greatly admired the way in which you and your men stuck it out in that tremendous rain, but I thought the arrangement was entirely

of your own making, perhaps intended out of compliment to me before you dined here this evening.' Enquiries were set on foot, and a cross-examination of the sentries elicited the origin of the order. We were gravely rebuked for our impudence by Mr. Twiss, the state Steward, who was, however, such a good friend of ours that he accepted our excuse that 'it was only an April Fool.' When it reached the ears of the Court, His Excellency and the rest of them enjoyed the joke played on the captain of the guard, who should have known better than to believe that a Lord Lieutenant would have sent a message of the kind through a couple of schoolboys and a sentry.

As Dean of the Chapel Royal, my father had to arrange for the rotation of preachers in that beautiful chapel. He also took great pains with his choir, which contained some fine voices. Mr. Benjamin Mullens's bass was a delight to listen to, not merely because of its fine timbre, but owing to the devotional spirit with which he used it. His wife was also a singer and a musical composer of charm, and their daughter Adelaide became a leading Dublin contralto.

To be one of the preachers before the Lord Lieutenant was a great distinction, reserved for a limited number of the Irish clergy. We were fortunate at this time in having at least half a dozen famous pulpit orators. Prominent amongst these was Magee, then Dean of Cork. The success of his famous sermon on 'The breaking of the net,' preached to the English Church Hierarchy who had gone over to Dublin when Irish Church Disestablishment was pending, was

reported to Dizzy, who made him Bishop of Peterborough, the first appointment of an Irish Dean to an English bishopric. Even as a political manœuvre it was fully justified, for Magee's speech in the House of Lords against the Irish Church Bill was one of the Parliamentary triumphs of the time.

It so fluttered the dovecote of the Ladies' Gallery that, at its close, a flight of frantically waved handkerchiefs broke loose and came sailing down upon the heads of the Senators below.

As a preacher Magee possessed transcendant powers, for he not only combined eloquence with close reasoning, but added to these a humour, now ironic, now genial, which to my mind differentiated him from any other occupant of the pulpit to whom I have listened.

After one of his sermons in the Castle Chapel Magee came to lunch at the Deanery, and my father then asked him, 'Is it true, Magee, that you commit your sermons to memory?'

'It is true,' he replied, 'simply because I write out every sermon before I deliver it, and this imprints it on my memory; I do not consciously learn it by heart. But that does not prevent me, should a fresh thought occur to me as I am preaching, from pursuing it and returning without difficulty to the main thread of my discourse.'

Magee was a fine administrator as well as a grand preacher, and this led to his promotion to the Archbishopric of York. But he was full, also, of practical humour. A provincial Lord Mayor who was a total

abstainer once entertained him in state, and apologised to him for the absence of all fermented liquors from the banquet by saying that it was with him a matter of principle never to have anything of the kind on his table. 'But, my Lord Bishop,' he added, 'you will find what I hope has been a suitable selection of the sort in your bedroom, when you retire for the night.'

Magee provided the retort courteous when the Mayor paid a return visit to his palace. He apologised to his guest for the absence of all unfermented liquors from the table, adding, 'However, I think you will find all that you offered me at your table in your bedroom upstairs.'

I was able to contrast Magee's sermons with those of Dr. Alexander, afterwards Bishop of Derry and finally the Irish Primate. His diction was more poetic than Magee's, for he was as fine a poet as his wife, famous for having written 'The Burial of Moses,' much admired by Tennyson, and such hymns as 'There is a green hill far away' and 'The roseate hues of early dawn.' There was also a spirituality about Alexander's preaching, apart from its poetic feeling, which could not fail to affect his hearers.

A largely attended evening service, at which Archbishop Whateley was to preach, was being held in St. Patrick's Cathedral, when suddenly the gas went out and the congregation was plunged in darkness. In spite of this mishap, there was only a moment's pause in the service. Then a new and finely modulated voice took it up, intoning the prayers and leading the responses until the gas went on again, and the Dean

of St. Patrick's, whose memory had not proved equal to the occasion, concluded the order of Evening Prayer. Then followed Archbishop Whateley's sermon; but immediately after the blessing he asked the unknown clergyman who had carried on the service in the dark to follow him and the Dean into the vestry, as they were both anxious to thank him personally for what he had done. To their surprise and amusement a junior Divinity student, named Coghlan, made himself known to them. The Archbishop was greatly tickled at the way in which this youngster had taken the wind out of the sails of the Cathedral clergy, and, recognising in Coghlan a kindred spirit, befriended him from that time forth.

Coghlan needed such a friend, for his life proved an unhappy one. He married young, but his wife left him, and when he became Rector of Mallow he was to be seen, immaculately dressed as always, wheeling his two younger children about in a perambulator. He later became a familiar figure in London pulpits.

His sermons, to which I listened in the Chapel Royal, were mercilessly analytic of human nature and had much of that character-searching quality to be found in George Eliot's novels. He was once, while still a Divinity student, spending a short holiday with a few friends in a Wicklow hotel. When out one evening in the hotel garden, he was called upon to give a specimen sermon after John Gregg, then a well-known Dublin evangelical preacher. He did this to perfection in Gregg's best Connaught brogue, with a brilliant parody of his familiar illustrations, and a shower of

synonyms such as Gregg would distribute alternately to left and right with rapid gesticulations and in dramatic crescendo, such as: 'The unrighteous man, the *ill-doer*, THE SINNER, THE REPROBATE.'

In the middle of this performance an Irish cleric who had only just arrived at the hotel, and had been listening to it at his sitting-room window, stepped out upon the balcony and revealed the familiar form and features of John Gregg himself.

Gregg had the good sense to take no notice then of what had happened. But when he became Bishop of Cork, and Coghlan, as Rector of Mallow, was being introduced to him as one of his clergy, Dr. Gregg observed: 'But I think Mr. Coghlan, though we were never introduced to one another at the time, we were once staying together at a Wicklow hotel, and I then heard you preparing the way for your success in the pulpit by an "imitation" which I hope was only "the sincerest form of flattery!"

Gregg once preached a sermon in the Chapel Royal during which he came down to earth from a high flight of emotional eloquence in a novel manner. He told how he was waiting eagerly in his study to argue the truths of Protestantism with several Roman Catholics whom he had invited to this discussion. 'There I sat,' he went on, 'with God's Word open before me, when suddenly I heard a rap at the door. "That's them," said I. But it wasn't them, it was the milk. Presently there came another knock down below. "That's them surely this time," said I – but it wasn't them, it was the wash. After a while there came a

third knock. "That's them for sure and certain this time," said I – and it *was* them. And in they came to our great, grand argument; and after a long, hard tussle I bate them, not with the poker, and not with the tongs, but,' bringing his clenched fist down sharply on the Bible open on the pulpit desk, 'with this little buke.'

Though greatly interested in the sermons of the famous Irish preachers I always preferred the short, simple, evening services in the 'dim religious light,' cast by the beautiful stained-glass windows of the Chapel Royal, rendered so impressive by my father's perfect reading and the unadorned wisdom of his quarter-of-an-hour sermons. Queen Victoria, when she visited Ireland in the year in which she lost the Prince Consort, was so touched by one of these that she sent him, in remembrance, a diamond-cross ring, which he treasured as long as he lived, and which is now my most precious heirloom.

Very pleasant at that time were the musical parties at the Deanery, where I was the only owl among nightingales. To these parties came the leading Dublin professional and amateur musicians, and at less formal gatherings my brother Jack's friends were welcome guests – Mahaffy, even then known as the General, owing to his extraordinary versatility; Dodgson Madden, later Mr. Justice Madden, the Shakespearean scholar; Robert Scott, the meteorologist, known as 'The Stork' from his habit of standing on one leg; Robert, afterwards Sir Robert Ball, the astronomer and most humorous of popular lecturers;

Arthur Palmer, a handsome young Canadian Professor of Latin at Dublin University; and David Plunket, afterwards Lord Rathmore, grandson on the one side of Lord Plunket the orator, and on the other of Chief Justice Bushe, 'the silver-tongued.' He was one of our Trinity College heroes in my day, both on the cricket field and at the debates of the College Historical Society. I heard him deliver his maiden speech in the House of Commons as member for our University. It made a deep impression, and there is no doubt that had his great ability been seconded by equal energy he might have risen to any height in the service of the State. But though as a political thinker he excelled with both tongue and pen, he allowed his inferiors to pass him in the race for power, and never reached Cabinet rank. He was an intimate of Father Healy, the famous Dublin wit and humorist, and would have been his biographer had he not been anticipated by Fitzpatrick, author of *The Sham Squire*, who rushed out such an indifferent memorial of his friend that Plunket said it had quite queered the pitch for him. Father Healy himself had an inkling that this was going to happen, for when he was in a sinking condition and some friend told him that Fitzpatrick was hard at work making a collection of his *bons mots*, 'Yes,' he replied, 'That ghoul is smelling about my grave.'

Sir Benjamin Lee Guinness, responsible at this time for the stout that bore his name, when dining with my father and mother told them this story of his family's fortunes. His father, who had been at the head of the business before him, was a political opponent of Daniel

O'Connell, and the Liberator boycotted his stout. Countless barrels were lying idle on the Dublin quays, and the firm stopped brewing. About that time old Mr. Guinness invited an Indian officer to dine with him, and gave him some of his prime liquor, which his guest had never tasted before.

'Do you know, Mr. Guinness,' said he, 'This is the very tipple for us military men out in India. Wine is too expensive; spirits dangerous; beer one is inclined to drink more of than is good for one's liver; but this is both meat and drink for a man, and no one in his senses would take more than a pint of it at a time. I suppose the demand for it is much greater than you can supply.' 'On the contrary,' replied Guinness, 'Dan O'Connell with his boycott and Father Mathew with his pledge have half ruined me between them.' 'Is that so?' said his friend, ruminating, 'Now look here, Mr. Guinness, suppose I take a consignment of this good stuff out to India and introduce it for you there?' 'Well, sir, India is a far cry, but if you really care to make the experiment I should be only too delighted to back it with a good commission.'

The bargain was struck between them, and its success was great beyond expectation. Guinness's Stout took on in India, and Indian military men and the civilians whom they entertained at mess insisted upon having their Dublin stout when they got home again. In this way that excellent beverage began to permeate Great Britain, and soon had a sale there greatly exceeding the demand there had been for it before the O'Connell boycott. When St. Patrick's

Cathedral was rebuilt by Sir Benjamin Guinness out of the wealth that thus accrued to him, the riddle was put, 'From what chapter of the New Testament should the text of the first sermon preached in the restored Cathedral be taken?' 'He-brews XX,' was the answer.

As a young man in Dublin, my father was well acquainted with Judge Day. The judge was then getting on in years, but was still extremely fat – a good sixteen stone – and as full of wit and humour as ever. One night, warming his hands, as was his practice after dinner, against his glass of hot whisky punch, the judge thus began: 'In the old coaching days it was usual for men of my size who could afford it to take two inside seats if they wished to travel comfortably. Well! Once when I had paid for and occupied my two seats in the London coach, there was a loud shout of laughter from the front of the inn at Chester from which we were starting. I looked out to ascertain the cause, and saw an immense man, supported on either side by a body-servant, struggling towards the coach. They hoisted him in with some difficulty, and, puffing and blowing, he sat down, completely occupying the two seats opposite mine, while his servants climbed up outside. He was a fine, intellectual-looking man, closely shaven and carefully dressed. When he had quite recovered from his exertions and settled down to the situation, he looked across at me and, realising the absurdity, broke into a fit of laughter in which I joined. I found my fellow-traveller a delightful companion. We discussed many subjects, and he excelled in them all; indeed I never remember meeting

a better-informed or more brilliant talker. When the time came for parting, he paid me the compliment of saying that he had greatly enjoyed my conversation, hoped for a better acquaintance in the future, and with that object, proposed an exchange of cards. He read upon mine "Mr. Justice Day"; I read upon his "Mr. Justice Doubleday" – and we Two-seaters ended our meeting, as we had begun it, with a hearty burst of laughter.'

The children of the Vice-Regal Court had just one privilege. This was to sit in the gallery of St. Patrick's Hall to watch the annual ball given there during the Lord Lieutenant's term of residency in Dublin Castle. It was known as 'St. Patrick's Ball,' and was held on St. Patrick's Day, or as near to it as possible, and close after the Vice-Regal Court 'Drawing-room' for which loyal Irish men and women came up from all parts of the country. On this occasion His Excellency had to kiss all the ladies presented to him. From our eyrie we watched the Lord Lieutenant while he received his many guests, enjoying the varied colour of the Naval and Military uniforms and of the women's Court dresses, and feeling ourselves qualified to criticise the stately quadrilles and lancers and the round dances that followed. Had not we ourselves been taught by the Court dancing-master, Sylvani (Sullivan was his actual name), who, poor fellow, had been recently killed by a leap through a trap-door when acting harlequin at the Theatre Royal, owing to the forgetfulness of the stage-hand who should have caught him?

At the last St. Patrick's Ball which I thus witnessed Lord Carlisle, as was his wont, came up for awhile into the gallery, said a kind word to us, and then, to my consternation, took me on his knee, started a conversation with some lady who had come up to the gallery on his arm, and finally began beating very hard and bad time on my back to the band music below. When I was at last set free, with a final friendly pat on the head from His Excellency, I made the mental resolve never to run such a risk again.

It was not long, however, before Lord Carlisle, pleased with some verses of mine which my father had shown him, startled me by what amounted to a command that I should go with my father to a dinner-party at the Vice-Regal Lodge. I was not seventeen at the time, and His Excellency cannot have realised that a boy of my age was not likely to possess a tail coat, but a command from Royalty, or Vice-Royalty, must be obeyed, and it was necessary within two or three days for me to be properly fitted out for the occasion. There was not time for the clothes to be made, even in a rough and ready way.

So I rushed off to my tutor, Tyrrell, who was just my size, and borrowed his dress suit which fitted me to a T.

My father did not warn me how to behave at the dinner; but I soon found that in order to enjoy the Vice-Regal dinner it was advisable to skip some of the courses, and that it was better to stick as far as possible to one kind of liquor, which I made champagne.

The guest of the evening was Archbishop Whateley. In the course of dinner the Archbishop suddenly asked Lord Carlisle: 'Do you happen to know the derivation of the word "pudding," Your Excellency?' Lord Carlisle thought it over and confessed his ignorance, but passed the question on, and it went round the table unanswered. Then the Lord Lieutenant observed: 'You see, Your Grace, that we are all at fault. Perhaps you will tell us the derivation yourself?' upon which the Archbishop retorted, rather rudely I thought: 'Do you think I should have asked you the question if I had known the answer of it myself?' 'Oh,' replied His Excellency, 'We all know that you are very fond of conundrums, and I thought you were propounding one.' This put the Archbishop in good humour, for he and the whole Court were reminded of an incident that had happened at a recent Vice-Regal reception.

A clever but saucy young aide-de-camp, knowing Archbishop Whateley's taste for riddles, came solemnly up to him and said, 'Your Grace, I have a riddle to put to you which I hope you will not regard as indiscreet.' 'Well, sir, what may it be?' 'What is the difference between an Archbishop and an ass?' The Archbishop pondered, and then replied, 'You have me at a disadvantage, sir! What is the answer?' 'Why, an Archbishop wears his cross upon his breast whilst the humble quadruped wears it on his back.'

'Come now,' went on the Archbishop briskly, 'Here's a return riddle for you. Can you tell me the difference between an aide-de-camp and an ass?'

St. George thought it over and then shook his head. 'Oh then, you give it up?' said the Archbishop – 'And so do I, because I don't think there's any difference!'

Dr. Hatchell, who succeeded one of the Hugheses as Court Physician, had a peculiar pug nose, but a round, jolly face and a very bright pair of eyes. I owed a good deal to him when once in delicate health, for he used to cheer me up with his funny stories. One day, when he was in country practice, he was starting out to visit a patient several miles away. He was in the act of mounting his horse when an old beggar-woman came up to him and cried, 'Give me a sixpenny bit for the love of God, Doctor, and may the Heavens be your bed!' 'Another time, my good woman, another time! Don't you see the hurry I'm in? I'm off to see a sick case.' But she still pressed him for help. 'Another time, my good woman, another time!' he repeated. 'Well, the Lord preserve your eyesight,' she finally burst out, 'for the divil a nose ye have to mount the specs. upon!'

A cousin of my father's was a poor curate in a country part of Ireland, with twenty-three children and a wife of much greater force of character than himself. The Marquess of Normanby was then Lord Lieutenant, and Mrs. Graves knew him to be a man with a kind heart and a keen sense of humour, so she determined to approach him personally on her husband's behalf. Provided by her County friends with a sufficient number of vehicles, she made a descent upon the Vice-Regal Lodge with her entire family, and sent in her card to Lord Normanby asking

for an audience for herself and her children. She obtained it, and went in at the head of the queue. When the entire procession had filed in, Lord Normanby asked in astonishment, 'Now madam, what can I do for you?' 'Your Excellency,' she replied, 'I am the mother of these twenty-three children; my husband is a poor country curate – and do you not think that the father of these twenty-three loyal young Protestants deserves a living good enough to enable us all to carry on?' 'Madam,' replied the Viceroy, 'Your claim is incontestable; the next vacant living in my gift is yours!'

My brother-in-law, the late Sir Massie Blomfield, once took a walk in the country with his grandmother, who was over ninety at the time. They came to a churchyard where they noticed this epitaph:

'Some has children and some has none –
Here lies the mother of twenty-one.'

'I can beat that,' exclaimed the old lady. Listen, Massie! –

"Some has children and others has few –
Here *stands* the mother of twenty-two." '

CHAPTER IV

PARKNASILLA

Our reception at Parknasilla – Boating and fishing in Kenmare Bay, Marty Shea and the Piano-tuner – Tussles with conger eels – A haul of sea-rats – Froude the Historian's *sans-culotte* fishing adventure – How we dug up Joanna Carmody – What happened to a giant's bones.

Why does Killarney excel in beauty all of the English, Scottish and Welsh lakes? Lough Lein, to give it its Irish name, is surrounded by noble mountains, Carn Tual, Mangerton, and the rest, purple with heather and golden with gorse, and further embellished by the finer shades of the finane, or ribbon-grass, which varies from sage green to olive and orange as the seasons succeed. There is much iron in the Killarney stone, and hence the wonderfully tinted rocks and boulders on the shores and islands of the lake, passing from pale mauve to deep violet. The Killarney foliage is unique. Apart from the many species of pine introduced from abroad by the Herberts and Castlerosses, there are yews as old as the oldest to be found in Scotland, hollies which attain the stature of fine trees, and arbutus growing almost as freely. The fern life also is of remarkable beauty and luxuriance. The

bracken grows thickly, the cover and couch of the wild red deer still to be found in the mountains, and the King Fern rises to the height of six feet or more, while in the more hidden watercourses the so-called Killarney fern, once so common as to have been used as a litter for cattle, still grows beside the more common hymenophyllum. One day Dr. Hooker, the botanist, stood watching a traveller as he stretched precariously into a recess at the foot of Torc Waterfall to make prize of a tuft of Killarney fern. 'Well done sir!' he cried out at last. 'And while you are about it, do you mind gathering for me that little fern growing just beside your foot?' The stranger obliged him, and Hooker walked off with a much rarer specimen.

Lichens and mosses of all shades abound. Wild flowers, some of them far from common elsewhere, such as the small and large blue butter-wort and the London Pride, fringe the roadsides. Lastly, river and stream commingle their colours and sounds in perfect harmony. And when the sun shines on the dusky waters of the lakes it produces just the bloom that brightens the black hair of a Munsterwoman of Spanish blood, and the blue of her eyes as they beam from under their dark lashes.

Into this country I came as a boy nearly seventy years ago. We were on our way to Parknasilla, destined to be our summer home for a generation to come. There was mist upon the higher mountains, and it came down upon our way as we drove the thirty miles from Killarney. We halted and refreshed ourselves at the inn beside the long half-way lake over which

the mist had begun to descend. But the sun soon broke out behind us, and we children were astonished a little later to see gigantic figures stalking before us through the mist – reflections upon the clouds of our seniors as they strode uphill, to relieve our tired horses of part of their load.

Nearer our journey's end the road led us past another long lake, without a tuft of herbage around it, only ridges of naked rock stiffened into horror at some old-world convulsion. No wonder its waters are haunted by a Piastha, or monstrous water-serpent.

And so we drove on through what we afterwards knew as 'The Gates of Kerry,' a part of the road that suddenly passed between two ramparts of bare rock, beyond which the superb vista of the Kenmare River with its woods and meadows, its islands, castles and cottages, broke into sight.

A strange company was there to greet us as we rolled up the gravel walk to Parknasilla. Leading tradespeople from Sneem and its neighbourhood, anxious to secure my father's custom, labourers employed on the farm and grounds, and a host of other figures that afterwards became familiar to us, from Fanny, the woman of all work whether in kitchen or potato-field, and 'Old Honesty,' so called because she addressed everybody as 'Honest Man' or 'Honest Woman,' to the village cripple upon his donkey, anxious for the first sight of 'the new Quality come into the country.' But the strangest figure of all was that of Moriarty, the village tailor, who with a majestic sweep of his hat announced himself as 'The Teesty Teeler

(Tasty Tailor), at the service of all their honours' honours.'

Old Parknasilla stands, as it stood then to meet us, faced by an open meadow and flanked by laburnums and other flowering shrubs, with an occasional pine-tree; but the back of the house has been considerably added to and improved by my father, as also the garden and grounds behind it have been.

We were soon at home there. Though the climate was mild and much rain fell during the year, the air was healthily salted by sea breezes. We had boats to row and sail, and our young legs readily carried us to the neighbouring trout stream put at our disposal by our good landlord, Christopher Bland, who lived hard by at Derryquin Castle, and with whose sons and daughters we became intimate friends. James, the eldest son, was living till lately in the neighbourhood; the second, Archibald, is a well-known West End doctor, and suggested to me the character song of Old Dr. Mack; whilst Mary is now Lady M'Mahon, the wife of a recent Governor of Egypt. Other friends of ours were the young Hartley boys of Renafurra; and Gabriel Stokes, the son of our County Surveyor. He and James Bland were the devoted young squires of my sisters Rosamund and Lily. Bland afterwards shared rooms with my brother Arnold in Old Trinity, and married our first cousin Agnes Block. Gabriel Stokes passed into the Indian Civil Service, earned a knighthood like his brother Henry, acted as temporary Governor-General of Madras, and ended his days doing good works in Dublin.

Boating and fishing were our special recreations, to which I should add sea-bathing. My father had a punt, a skiff, two large rowing boats, a pinnace, and another boat purchased from the owners of a French vessel which had been wrecked on our coast. Its original name was the *Fidélité*, but our boatman could not get nearer to this than 'Fiddle-ite,' and so it was rechristened.

In these large boats we crossed the mouth of the Kenmare River on fishing and mountaineering expeditions, rowed by four of our labourers in red caps, blue jerseys and white ducks, my father always at the helm. Happily he was a skilful steersman, for though the first three miles of our passage were generally smooth enough, being sheltered by Sherkey Island, at the end of that distance rough weather was often encountered, and it was no easy matter for him to keep our nose straight against the oncoming waves. Sometimes, indeed, he had to take a very devious course towards the other side, when facing a squall from the Atlantic.

In fine weather we always rowed to church on Sundays, through the wooded islands which formed part of the Parknasilla property, and then for about a mile up the Sneem river to the wharf at the foot of that village. The punt and the skiff were used for shorter passages, but had only room for a few of us.

Every morning and evening during the summer months my brother Arnold and I were called at six o'clock to haul the net which we had set outside or between the islands. Our bedroom was on the second

floor, and looked over the farmyard. It was only accessible from without by the yard wall, from which one of the men would step upon the ledge outside our window and tap against it with a 'Get up, Master Alfred! Get up, Master Arnold!' But often we required so much rousing that it was found advisable to noose a rope round one of our arms when we got into bed, pass the loose end through the window, and have it tugged at from below when we were wanted for the morning net-drawing. This plan proved effective, but it was once unfortunately misapplied.

At the usual early hour the tug came, but met with no response. It was repeated, this time more vigorously, till the sleeper's bed rocked from side to side, but again without result. Finally Marty Shea, our boatman, leapt from the wall upon the window-sill and rapped hard at the window, shouting, 'Get up! For the love of God, get up, Master Alfred and Master Arnold!' But then he saw something that, as he afterwards declared, nearly made him fall on his back into the yard – the grey head and staring eyes of an old man: the head, in fact, of a piano-tuner, for whom Arnold and I had had to turn out the night before; piano-tuners being rare birds in those parts, and therefore requiring very delicate treatment by householders with a piano to tune in a climate notoriously unkind to that instrument.

The excitement of the early morning row out to the net was intense, culminating in the moment when we reached the corks and peered breathlessly into the deep. On a good day mackerel coruscated in the

meshes just below the corks, an occasional white trout glittered, a rare salmon shone; below these struggled some of the commoner fish – cod and ling, bream, and grey and red gurnet; and at the bottom of the net came the flat fish – rays, which we foolishly threw away, plaice and brill, halibut and sole, turbot and Johnny Dory. The plaice were excellent, the sole and brill not of the best quality; but the rare turbot and Johnny Dory, like salmon and white trout, real prizes.

Sometimes poachers had been before us and spoiled our nets. Indeed some of the Kerry Squireens were not above salt-water poaching of this kind. But when that happened we had generally ourselves to blame for not being up betimes.

Towing in the bay gave us excellent sport with the pollack and mackerel. A skinned eel was the best bait, barring a strip of mackerel, which was a sure draw for their cannibal kin when that fish was taking.

Deep-sea fishing from an anchored boat was generally carried on by night so we did not, as boys, come in for much of it. But as we grew in years we experienced the pleasure of being in a big turf boat amongst story-telling peasants, reddening their dudheens or warming their hands over peat smouldering in a basin, till the cod and ling began 'pinching' and a good catch followed.

Conger fishing produced the fiercest excitement. The conger eel sometimes attains to a great size on the Kerry coasts, though such monsters as haunt the waters of the Channel Islands are few and far between.

One of these, however, was seen in the creek between our shore and Ilaunakilla by some workmen who were building our Parknasilla boathouse. It was on the point of attacking one of their children as he was wading in the water. He cried out, and his father came to his rescue with his pick, and struck the brute on the head but did not kill it, for a conger takes a deal of killing. If you get hold of one, when fishing from a boat, keep his head tightly bent over the thwart, and sever it from the spine with a strong, sharp knife. Do not let a conger into the boat if you can help it, for if he breaks away from the hook you will find him an unpleasant companion, as I have good reason to know.

One afternoon, after catching half a dozen mackerel on a towing line, I strung them together through the gills and was washing them with my head turned away at the stern of the punt as it lay close to the side of Colonel Hartley's landing-place. A sudden tug was given to the fish I was holding, and when I drew them over the side I found that one of them had lost its head. I silently showed my fish to the boatman, Dorrohy. 'A conger!' he whispered, 'keep him in play, sir, while I borrow the Colonel's gaff.' He leapt on shore, and was back with it in a few minutes. I sacrificed another mackerel or two, drawing the conger nearer and nearer the boat, till finally Dorrohy gaffed the brute through the gills and dragged it on board. But in doing so he smashed the gaff, and the conger broke loose in the bottom of the boat, barking and biting at us. We finished him with the oars, fortunately without injury to ourselves, for he was a six-

footer, and could have relieved us of a finger or two with little difficulty.

News once reached us that there were a number of congers in a deep sea pool at the near end of one of my father's islands, into which we could bring our punt with the incoming tide. Pilchard were in the bay at the time. With a supply of these for bait we slipped into the pool, and with our strong lines well gimped for a foot above our hooks began to fish.

Before long we had caught and executed a four and a half footer. Then I got stuck in a far larger one. Our boat was close to the shore, and, realising that it would be hard to kill him on the gunwale, I jumped out upon the beach. He had swallowed the pilchard voraciously, and the hook was therefore well down his ugly throat, so my task was not as difficult as I had supposed. At last I slipped him up out of the water over a shelf of rock and on to a patch of sea grass, where I hung him up in a holly tree, round a short branch of which I had looped my line. Then, as my pocket-knife was not equal to the occasion, I shouted for all I was worth to Murty Shea, who was chopping wood at the other side of the island, 'Murty, Murty, hurry up with your axe – here's a big conger for you to kill!' And in a minute or two he came running to my assistance. 'Hould tight to his tail, your honour! Now shall I pacify him?' – and he did with a vengeance. That conger measured six feet from his still twitching tail to his ill-favoured jowl, and when cleaned and prepared for salting weighed fifty pounds. We did not, like the Romans, esteem conger a delicacy so I presented

my catch to our farm servant, old Fanny, and she appetised her potatoes with it through the whole of the next winter.

I joined my father and Arnold and one of our boatmen in the punt, and we were looking down into the deep, clear water in which our baits were surging, when an almost awed exclamation burst from us all. Through it came stealing an immense grey eel, 'the father of all eels,' as my father whispered; not blue-black like the two we had taken, but uncannily grey, a monster of hoary antiquity. He came nosing round our pilchard, and finally swallowed one of them whole. This time Arnold and I tackled the monster together. We jumped out on to the shore, and putting out all our strength against him dragged him up to a distance of about ten feet. Then Arnold, who was next him, slipped and fell, dropping the line, which at once slackened towards the conger. The brute sucked the line into his jaws, bit it through above the gimping, and was free. Arnold sprang to his feet and we tried to cut off the monster's retreat to the sea, but it was no use, and though the boatman made at him with his oar as he slipped back into the water and struck him hard, the eel dropped sullenly down into deep water and there remained. Three weeks later he was thrown dead upon the shore at Bunow – a nine-footer, with our sharp hook in his stomach.

Other monsters of the deep were rare. When a boy, my brother Jack was followed in his punt by a huge blue shark; but the creature was probably suffering too much from the cold of our waters to try and make

him part company with his boat. An odd whale has been observed spouting at the mouth of the bay during our time; dolphins were occasionally seen; porpoises were a common sight in fine weather; and once, while boating off the coast of Derrynane, a party of us got into a colony of sunfish, or basking sharks – harmless monsters which our boatmen beat off with the oars when they came gambolling too near us. These cetaceans are full of oil. An enterprising Kerryman in a curragh harpooned one of them, and was taken out so far to sea by the sunfish, that he thought it advisable to cut himself free.

Pigeon Island, which lies off Parknasilla and is so called from the rock pigeons which haunt it, had other inhabitants as well, as I have recorded in the following ballad.

I'll tell you of a wonder that will stiffen up your hair,
That happened two poor fishermen convanient to Cape Clear.
They just had run their boat afloat, they'd hardly gripped an oar,
When their dog leapt in, their cat stepped in, that ne'er did so before.
Now, what overcame the creatures to start from shore?

Says one brother: What's come o'er them two, who ne'er on land agree,
To settle up their difference a-this-way on the sea?
I consave, replied the other, 'tis the portent we could wish

For a powerful take of pilchard, since that same's their
favourite fish.
'Tis a symptom, for sure, of a power of fish.

Well! when the rising moon it showed a swiftly rushing
shoal,
Their net they shot, and found they'd got a pretty tidy
haul;
But when a dozen yards of mesh they'd plumped into
the hold,
They saw their fish were fine sea-rats, which made their
blood run cold
As around and around them they screeched and rolled.

But ere each rat could rip his way from out the noosing
net,
Bedad, the jaws of Towser or the claws of Tom he met!
Then safely our two fishermen rowed home from out
the bay –
And Tom and Towser from that time were heroes, you
may say,
Round about the countryside many and many a day.

Seals were not so frequently seen on our shore of the Kenmare Bay, but they abounded on the Cork side. Once when Arnold and I, with Bland, Stokes, and my sisters Rosamund and Lily were rowing back in the evening from 'the overside,' singing as we went, a couple of fine seals which were lying on a ridge of rock outside Ardgroom harbour suddenly slipped into the sea and began swimming after us, attracted by the

music. When they came to within about two hundred yards, one of our friends took up his gun to fire at them, but the girls hotly interfered in favour of their new lovers. The seals followed us unharmed until the singing ceased, then turned and swam back to their lair.

There were several old Irish fortifications of earth and stone nearby. Of the earthen forts, Doonkilla was the most perfect specimen. It occupied a commanding position above a chain of bog lakes fringed with reeds and full of large but sulky trout, and contained the usual underground passages leading into chambers believed to have been storehouses for grain or cellars for metheglin. Arnold and I often penetrated underground, being enabled to do so owing to our slender proportions. We always carried a candle, as its extinction would warn us of foul air. But this we never encountered. The peasants who watched these descents into inner darkness were generally disconcerted by them, and would mutter to one another in Irish as we went down. On one occasion an old man caught me by the shoulder and begged me anxiously not to venture below. I laughed at him as I shook myself free and went down, despite his fear that I should be carried off by the fairies which inhabited the interior of the fort. The country people call them Danish forts, the term being probably a corruption of 'Da Danaan;' for Irish folklore has it that the Tuatha Da Danaan, early conquerors of Ireland, disappeared before the Milesians into these underground dwellings and became their fairy inhabitants.

There is a story of an ardent antiquary who had failed to extract any folk lore from the people living round one of these old Irish lisses, and finally, disregarding their unexplained warnings, ventured down alone into the chambers beneath. The natives leaned anxiously over the entrance when he had disappeared, and suddenly heard fairy music coming up from below. Soon the man reappeared in great alarm, but the music continued for some time, and all listened breathlessly till it should stop. When the strains ceased, their tongues were unloosed at last, and the folklorist got his fill of fairy-tales. Next day, when no one was about, he went below again and retrieved his musical box.

We were fortunate at this time in seeing a good deal of Froude, the historian, for he was deeply engaged upon *The English in Ireland.*

He was then a fine figure of a man, tall and well-proportioned with regular features and dreamy blue eyes – which could, however, meet you with a very quizzical expression. The upper part of his face was strong; the mouth sensitive, and he was a delightful talker.

But he was not popular with some of the Kerry gentry whose forebears he had attacked for their smuggling, not to say piratical, habits. He was full of stories of the O'Sullivan country, and some of these he has enshrined in his delightful romance, *Two Chiefs of Dunboy* written while at Derreen, in what would have been the very centre of the incidents he so vividly describes.

Froude was once salmon fishing in the Barle or Exe, which was then in flood. It was before the time of waders, and in order to get into mid-stream over a good pool he had taken off not only his shoes and stockings, but his trousers. These he had thrown over his shoulder, and was crossing from rock to rock, when his foot slipped and he was only just able to save his rod from destruction. He was not so lucky with his trousers, which fell into the water and disappeared downstream.

He was several miles from the friend's house in which he was staying, not a bachelor's house either. It was still broad daylight, so he fished away philosophically in undress until evening came on. Then he put up his rod and took cover.

The girls were about, and he had to lie very low on several occasions; but at last, when they were a little way from the house, he crept through the shrubbery, made a successful bolt for the back entrance, rushed up the back stairs, and plunged unseen into the safety of his bedroom. Froude brought Charles Kingsley and his daughter Rose, who had been in South America with him, to visit us and we were all as deeply impressed by his vivid personality as we had been by his novels.

Arnold and I did a great deal of mountaineering, fishing and antiquity-hunting with my father. On one occasion we were driving from Sneem to Derrynane when we noticed a standing stone projecting to the height of four or five feet from the centre of a wide stretch of sea sand. It was not far from Cahirdaniel

Bridge, and therefore upon the O'Connell property. Said I to my father: 'Is there any chance of there being an Ogham inscription upon that stone?' He smiled, and answered: 'Well, just a bare possibility.'

'Have inscriptions been found to your knowledge upon stones half-buried in the sand?'

'It is rather strange that you should ask me that question, because if you looked across the bay you could almost see with a strong glass the spot where years ago one of the most remarkable finds of Ogham inscriptions was ever made. A gale so tremendous that it might almost have been called a cyclone came down upon a tract of sand very like the one we are looking at. It ploughed into the sand, and whirled it away in columns. It was such a sand-storm as is not uncommon in the Sahara, with this difference, that it had to deal not with loose desert sand but with sea sand slowly caked together through the centuries. The next morning the country folk were amazed and somewhat alarmed to find a circle of great stones which they had never seen before standing naked upon the shore, each of them bearing upon its edges the mysterious Ogham inscription. I happened to be in the neighbourhood at the time, and you may imagine that as soon as I was made aware of what had happened I was on the spot with my heel-ball and rubbing paper, so as to record the inscriptions as quickly as possible. My sudden appearance immediately after the disclosure of the strange circle of stones, and my intense preoccupation with them, made the peasants who gathered in whispering groups regard me with almost as much awe as

they felt for the old stone circle which the sands had given forth. I made very successful rubbings of the stones, and these are now in the Royal Irish Academy. There is an answer to your question.'

This recital at once fired my brother and myself with the desire for a closer view of the stone which we had just noticed. We raced for it, and on reaching it almost simultaneously cried out 'There are marks upon it.' But were they marks of the right sort, or merely those caused by sharpening a tool upon the stone? Our father, whom we had excitedly beckoned to join us, was in some little doubt, though he inclined to believe that they were the tail-end of an inscription, much the greater part of which would thus be covered up in the sand. It was decided, therefore, that we should call upon Daniel O'Connell, a grandson of the Liberator, upon whose property we were, and ask his leave to dig up the stone. We found him at home at Derrynane Abbey with nothing particular to do, and so ready to help our excavation that he provided us with workmen armed with pickaxes, and a couple of pieces of timber for rolling the stone up on after we had dug it out. He came himself with other members of his family to watch the operations, and our work began. But before long we noticed that the men were not working with a will, for they would occasionally stop and gesticulate as they talked to one another in Irish. My father was watching them and listening attentively, and from the expression on his face seemed to me to be struggling between amusement and annoyance.

'What are they saying?' I asked him.

'It's not so much what they are saying, but what they are not doing.'

'How do you mean?'

'Well, the fact is they are going to strike work, and for rather a curious reason. They believe that St. Patrick was once walking along this strand when he met a woman called Joanna Carmody carrying a basket of dillisk (dulse) on her back. The Saint saluted her kindly and asked for a piece of her dillisk. She rudely refused, whereupon St. Patrick with one wave of his staff changed her into this standing stone. These good people believe the story, and therefore not unnaturally object to our digging Joanna up; and I am very much afraid that in spite of Mr. O'Connell's goodwill we shall get no further with this business.'

By this time, although the little digging that had been done showed that the inscription was continuing along two edges of the stone, it was quite clear that the workmen had made up their minds to shirk the job altogether. They stood leaning upon their picks and spades, sulkily muttering to one another in Irish on the subject of our projected sacrilege, when suddenly there appeared in our midst the strangest-looking old man you could wish to see. His hair was 'as white as the drivelling snow,' as I have heard it described in Kerry. He was very old and shrivelled, and yet alert and hardy-looking. His eyes were bright and keen, and there was a healthy colour upon his withered cheeks like the glow upon a fissured russet apple. From his eyrie on the mountain height this eagle-eyed old man of ninety summers had seen our unwonted

movements upon the sands below, and had descended upon us for an explanation. He eagerly questioned our working party in Irish and, having heard what they had to say, burst into a shrill laugh, winking his eyes and nodding his head, and then began bantering them to the very top of his bent.

There was something weird to us boys in this Gaelic pantomime which we were quite at a loss to understand until, to our delight, the old man broke into English.

'I was just telling these boys, master' (touching his hat to O'Connell), 'the rale truth of it all. It's seventy years come Shrove since a tinker came hether from the over side wesht beyant Berehaven, and fine tales he had to tell, but the finest and foolishest he told was that of Joanna Carmody. Right well I remember him telling us, be rayson that I brought a whole load of pans and kettles from the Hill beyant for the old chap to rectify, and the ould folk all were cursin' his impidence at the traditions he was invintin' just to plaze the taste of the young boys and girls. They were all a pack of lies from beginning to end, so I was toul' thin and so I have believed ever since. Joanna Carmody indeed! I'll show you how much I give for Joanna Carmody! Give us a hoult of your pick, Mike Murphy, you're the biggest believer in this nansince, and all of ye that's not ashamed of follyin' the belief of yer honest, dacint forefathers agin the cock-headed invintions of a stravagin' pot-and-bellas man, shpit on yer hands and go at the work agin for the master and these gintlemen. Ah, then, is it likely that St. Patrick would have put an inscription all along the poor

woman's side? In the name of God, did we hear of that same bein' done by the Almighty to Lot's wife when she was made a pillar of salt for her lookin' back at the wicked city?'

The determination of the old man soon had a surprising effect upon his fellows. They set to work with a will, and before long Joanna Carmody was completely unearthed, and proved to have a fine Ogham inscription down the whole length of her.

But the sequel is a melancholy one. Father John, the parish priest, did not care to take the same view of the myth of Joanna as explained by the man of the mountain. Indeed, he went so far as to prevent the standing stone from being removed to a safe position in the grounds of Derrynane Abbey. The late Earl of Dunraven meditated a nocturnal descent upon the shore to carry away the stone by stealth, but this raid never came off, and by now Joanna Carmody is doubtless wholly swallowed up in the sands upon which we left her lying some seven-and-sixty years ago.

Such standing stones as this inscribed one are common enough in Kerry, but the Ogham inscription is rarely found upon them. During my father's antiquarian researches, in which as a boy I took part, we ascertained that it was not unusual for the poor peasant, only too often anxious about the wherewithal to pay his rent, to dream that money was buried underneath one of these stones. Generally under cover of night, in order to keep his proceedings secret, he would dig beneath the stones, and in doing so dislodge or even tumble them, as the term was. I remember finding

a stone of the kind lying on its face on the side of a hill and going over to a man digging in a potato ridge with the sudden enquiry: 'Who dreamt that he found money under that stone? And who dug it up and found nothing under it?' The man turned round angrily and swore at me in Irish till he was black in the face. I had spotted the vain dreamer of dreams.

My father and I were once staying with Mr. Mahony of Dunloe in the neighbourhood of Killarney. Our host was a brilliant but very casual Irishman. Late during the night after our arrival we were awakened by a stifling smoke accompanied by a strong smell of burning. We were sleeping in the same room, and jumped out of bed to see what was wrong. On the landing outside our door we found that a scuttle of coals, some of which were burning, had heeled over and was setting fire to the house. A lazy servant had adopted the plan of preparing for the morning fire-lighting by putting some embers at the bottom of the scuttle. We were not surprised to hear, after emptying our jugs of water over the burning coals, that there had been two bad fires in this house, one on each side of that part which was now in occupation.

A short time before, in the course of digging operations on the estate, one of the workmen's picks had vanished and fallen with a loud reverberation into what proved to be an old burying-place below. Its roof and doorway were supported by inscribed stones, while human and animal bones littered the floor. One huge human skeleton was in a very battered state when we saw it. A stranger to the neighbourhood had

been found one day hammering it to pieces over a stream that ran near by. 'I have been quare in the head after the brain fever,' he declared, 'and I was sleepin' in the same bed with a strange man in a Tralee lodging-house, when I dreamt that me rayson would come back to me if I went to an old forth beyant Killarney and went into a chamber under it where I would find a giant's bones. These I was to take and bate to pieces over runnin' water, and then me right mind would come back to me. I told me dream to me bedfellow, and he said, "That's strange, for I've heard tell that there is such a forth and cave with a giant's bones in it at Dunloe by Killarney," and so I came here, and that's why I am breakin' up these bones.' With these words the bone-breaker hurried off and was never seen again.

The friendship between Edwin, Earl of Dunraven, the Irish Archæologist, and my father descended to their sons, Lord Adare and my brother Jack, who became inseparables. I well remember them together in our nursery, each wolfing a round of bread and butter, thickly brown-sugared by our good Betsy. Then I see Adare in waterproofs from head to foot, stooping to accept my mother's hand for a step down from our turf quay into a rowing boat, in which a party of us were about to cross to Garinish; but somehow their hands missed, the boat receded from the shore and Adare plumped head over ears into the water. I can still laugh at his aggrieved: 'Oh Mrs. Graves,' when he re-appeared.

He was even then a great sportsman and no one in

the Barony could dance a greater number of jig steps, as many as sixty-four. Arnold and I had added jig and reel to our dance repertory and were therefore delighted when St. John's eve came round with its bonfire-dance at the Derryquin cross-roads. For all Sneem and Tahilla were there, passing their babies through the fire and then taking partners for the 'Swaggering Jig,' fourhand Reel or 'Longdance.'

On this occasion we had a surprise in store for us all. For Lord Ducie came up from the Bay with his yachtsmen, carrying blue lights and prepared to answer a challenge to them to dance the Hornpipe against our Ballybog boys. And a splendid struggle it proved. The competitors were declared quits, as dancers on the ground, but then Micky Dease mounted a table and got it to hornpipe along with him in a way which made the best yachtsman shake his head and own himself beaten.

Our musician was James Buckley, a fine wandering fiddler, from whom I picked up the air to which I afterwards wrote 'Father O'Flynn.'

The original of Father O'Flynn, the Rev. Michael Walsh, was parish priest of Kilcrohane in Kerry. He came of good farming stock in Co. Tipperary and on leaving Maynooth was posted to Kilcrohane where he spent the remainder of his life. It was not till 1929 that I met any of his relations; I then made the acquaintance at Taormina in Sicily of his nephew, the Rev. Patrick J. Walsh, curate of Cashel. Father Walsh, as I remember him, was a man of about sixty, tall and active with a humorously benevolent face and,

although well filled out, he still hunted below the Sneem mountains with his own harriers which came of Daniel O'Connell's famous breed.

I never met him with a trout rod in his hand, but he encouraged Arnold and myself to fish in what was known as the Priest's Pool in the river beneath his presbytery. After an early start from Parknasilla, which was two miles away, we breakfasted with him one morning. The cat had knocked down and broken all his egg-cups.

'Never mind, boys,' he laughed, 'take these rolls and knock holes in them for your eggs and you'll get on well enough.'

After breakfast he took us to look at a large wall-map of the United States, on which he had marked with flagged pins the positions of the opposing forces in the American Civil War, then in full blast. I have no doubt which way his sympathies went.

Father Walsh was on most friendly terms with my father, and a real bond of sympathy between them was their love for Irish music, which Father Walsh played delightfully on the Irish pipes. He had a great store of Kerry and Tipperary tunes, collected by himself, and generously put them at the disposal of Dr. Petrie for his famous collection.

My father owned one of the few orchards in our neighbourhood, and when a raid upon it had been made by some of Father Walsh's young parishioners, he thus denounced them from the altar.

'I understand that some of you young rascals have been robbing the orchard of my friend Dr. Graves,

who comes down here to rest after his hard work in Trinity College. This must not happen again, or I'll take a stick to you.'

His warning was enough.

When his end was approaching, he asked my father to come and shake him by the hand for the last time, and died not long afterwards.

The following extract published by permission of Jarrolds Limited, the London publishers, is from *Omniana*, the autobiography of an Irish Octogenarian, James Franklin Fuller, F.S.A., my father's Diocesan architect and a good family friend of ours.

'When the day came for departure from Kerry I felt that next to father and mother, the person whom I should miss most was the fine old parish priest, Father Walsh; with whom I often put in a strenuous day's coursing – a sport of which he was very fond and which meant vigorous exercise, tramping mountains, jumping rocks, fording streams and negotiating bogs, giving the greyhounds, as well as ourselves, enough to do, and the hare a sporting chance of escape. He was in every sense a grand old man, beloved by his flock, and standing high in the estimation of all Protestant gentry of the Parish, including the members of the family of the learned Dr. Graves, afterwards Bishop of Limerick, who resided at Parknasilla; and he was moreover the original of "Father O'Flynn," in the song of that title always sung with such rapturous applause by Signor Foli, an Irishman, whose real name was Foley, but who changed it to suit the fashion of the time.

'Father Walsh celebrated early Mass, on alternate Sundays at Sneem and Tahilla; and, returning from the latter he passed near our entrance gate, where I invariably watched for him to pick me up, getting him to drive me to the Protestant Church in Sneem – the gate of which he had to pass on the way to his presbytery.

'He spoke Irish fluently – which was necessary in a parish where not a few peasants in those days spoke no English; and at the Petty Sessions he frequently sat on the Bench with my uncles Bland and Hyde, not only to interpret and explain to them, but also to exhort, in the native tongue, litigants who sometimes were not averse from giving a "twist" to their evidence and were not sufficiently alive to the obligations of an oath. They might lie to a magistrate but to forswear themselves to a parish priest was unthinkable. Generally, too, he had mastered both sides of the case before it came to be tried. He was a large-bodied as well as a large-hearted man; and the physical exercise which his sporting pursuits involved was necessary.

'I recall an amusing incident, as the result of a day's grouse shooting. He sent next morning a local "character" the village "dummy" with a present of birds to Dr. Graves. The explanatory label got lost on the way to Parknasilla; the servant could not understand the mumblings of the "dummy" and Dr. Graves had ultimately to interview him. The difficulty was to ascertain who had sent the game. Several names were mentioned, but the "dummy" shook his head negatively; when, suddenly, an inspiration seized him. Bringing

his big stick, promptly, to the "present," he uttered a loud "click" with his tongue to signify the shot; and then, transferring the weapon to his left hand, with his right he solemnly made the sign of the cross upon his breast.

'"Oh! to be sure, I understand," said Dr. Graves. "Father Walsh, of course," and he sent the "dummy" back with a letter of thanks to the parish priest, and a liberal gratuity for himself.

'But the good priest was not without his troubles – who is? He incurred the censure of Dr. Moriarty, Bishop of Kerry, because an aged woman, a parishioner, died rather suddenly without the last rites of the church; Father Walsh was not to be found, being out for a day's coursing. The fact came to the ears of the Bishop, who was a strict disciplinarian. It was he who uttered the terrible denunciation of the Fenians, in which he said that – "Eternity was not long enough nor Hell hot enough, for their punishment in the next world." When he arrived to investigate the charge, he was invited as a matter of course to Derriquin, the residence of the leading local magistrate Mr. Christopher Bland, and there the priest did not lack wholehearted testimony in his favour. But the Bishop, in addition to admonishing the parish priest, "put a curate on him," as a humble parishioner phrased it, whose stipend Father Walsh had to pay, and since then a curate has always to be maintained at the cost of the parish priest of Kilcrohane.

'One more reminiscence of Father Walsh. The "old mistress" (as she was always called) of Derriquin, when

her grandson entered into possession and brought home a young wife, resigned the reins of government, and came to reside with us at Glashnacree, where she spent her remaining years. During what was thought to be her last illness, Father Walsh was a frequent caller. When the end was very near, he came; and in answer to his inquiry, my mother expressed the belief that she was calmly and peacefully passing away.

"Ah! is that so? May I not see her?"

"Indeed you may, Father Walsh. Come," and my mother led the way.

'The sick room was on the ground floor. The window of it is a low casement one, and the sash on this occasion stood open. A poor peasant woman standing on the lawn outside saw the two enter; and saw the priest stoop, and kiss the forehead of the motionless figure on the bed. The woman outside fell on her knees in prayer; and when the priest came out she rose, and eagerly accosted him, clasping her hands.

'"Shure, Father, God be praised, there'll be a gap open for her in heaven – somehow."

'It was more as an asseveration than a question demanding an answer; and was left at that by him.'

* * * *

Another grandson of old Mrs. Bland, of whom James Fuller writes as above, was Archibald Bland, whom I couple with Father O'Flynn as a typical Kerryman under the title of 'Ould Dr. Mack' and my song of that name is an attempt to describe him as the devoted doctor, the rare sportsman and the fine humorist that he was and is. As the son of our Squire

of Derryquin Castle he used to come home there for his holidays from his medical work in Dublin and London, and then gave his services free to any of his father's ailing tenants who needed them. 'Well, Hurley,' he said to one who had come to consult him, 'What's wrong with you?' 'Well, Master Archibald (He holding up his right leg), I don't rightly know whether it's an abster or an ulster, but it feels very like a gumboil on my right shin.'

On another occasion he was called into a cottage to see a patient for whom he had already prescribed, but whose wife had begged him to look in, as her poor man was much worse. 'Did you give him the beef tea I ordered him, Mrs. Sheehan? 'Indeed and I did, more's the pity!' 'More's the pity? Isn't that it in a skillet there on the hob?' 'It is Doctor!' 'Well! (tasting it) it couldn't be better.' 'That way, Doctor, of coorse; but try it with the crame and sugar!'

And here I may bring in my song which my daughter Rosaleen has just set to a fine old Irish air in The O'Neill Collection, 'The Thrush's Nest.'

OULD DOCTOR MACK

Ye may tramp the world over from Delhi to Dover,
And sail the salt say from Archangel to Arragon;
Circumvint back through the whole Zodiack,
But to ould Doctor Mack ye can't furnish a paragon.
Have ye the dropsy, the gout, the autopsy?
Fresh livers and limbs instantaneous he'll shape yez;
No way infarior in skill, but suparior
And lineal postarior to ould Aysculapius.

Chorus:

He and his wig wid the curls so carroty,
Aigle eye and complexion clarety;
Here's to his health,
Honour and wealth,
The king of his kind and the cream of all charity.

How the rich and the poor, to consult for a cure,
Crowd on to his door in their carts and their carriages,
Showin' their tongues or unlacin' their lungs,
For divel wan symptom the docther disparages.
Troth an' he'll tumble for high or for humble
From his warm feather-bed wid no cross contrariety;
Makin' as light of nursin' all night
The beggar in rags as the belle of society.

Chorus:

He and his wig, etc.

And, as if by a meracle, ailments hysterical,
Dad, wid one dose of bread pills he can smother,
And quench the love sickness wid comical quickness,
Prescribin' the right boys and girls to each other.
And the sufferin' childer! Your eyes 'twould bewilder
To see the wee craythurs his coat tails unravellin' –
Each of them fast on some treasure at last,
Well knowin' ould Mack's just a toy-shop out travellin'.

Chorus:

He and his wig, etc.

Thin, his docthering done, in a rollickin' run
Wid the rod or the gun he's the foremost to figure;
Be Jupiter Ammon! what jack-snipe or salmon
E'er rose to backgammon his tail-fly or trigger!
And hark that view holloa! 'Tis Mack in full follow
On black 'Faugh-a-ballagh' the countryside sailin'!
Och, but you'd think 'twas ould Nimrod in pink,
Wid his spurs cryin' chink over park wall and palin'!

Chorus:

He and his wig wid the curls so carroty,
Aigle eye and complexion clarety.
Here's to his health,
Honour and wealth,
The king of his kind and the cream of all charity.

CHAPTER V

LATER DAYS AT PARKNASILLA

An ass-assinating ass – The pony who made friends with a sheep – Was Parknasilla haunted? – Trout fishing on stream and lake – Our landlord and his water-bailiff – Laider and why he put back the trout – How we learnt to swim and a wild-cat I once turned – Our Plymouth Brethren neighbours – Parson Watson and his strange goings on – The Orange steward and his green pig – Antiquarian visitors.

PARKNASILLA soon became a farm as well as a summer residence. We began to keep fowls of our own, as the chickens brought to us for sale had so little upon them that they were scarcely worth the half-a-crown a pair asked for them. Later we went in for ducks and geese, and even turkeys. My father's property was in part good grazing ground, so we kept cows enough to supply a large household with milk and sufficient sheep to provide us with mutton. While he was still a Dean, we got on well enough with a horse and jaunting car for paying visits and making purchases in the village, and a donkey for bringing in peat from a tract of bogland assigned for our use.

Jack, the old donkey, was a vicious brute, and many a tumble he gave us when we tried to ride him bare-

backed. Our landlord once sent in a heavy bill of costs on Jack's account for the destruction of a young donkey. My father thought it advisable to pay up, and accordingly obtained from Mr. Bland a receipt for the amount of his claim in this form: 'Received from Dr. Graves in compensation for the Ass-assassination of one young Ass, the sum of two pounds sterling.'

Then we had a clever pony, who made friends with one of the sheep intended for our consumption. The two became inseparable, so much so that the pony foiled one attempt after another to catch the sheep for the butcher, running between her and her would-be captors, biting and kicking at them till the sheep had got safe off into hiding. At last it seemed as if she had been cornered on the shore opposite one of the islands; but a surprise was in store for her pursuers. The pony, coming to the rescue, lay down for the sheep to mount its back, slipped off into the sea, and swam with her to the island, from which he neighed defiance at her foes.

Dogs we did not keep at this time, and therefore we had to do battle by ourselves against canine marauders. There was one great white hungry brute in particular, the terror of our women servants, whom we had long failed to bring to justice. Finally we three brothers, well armed for the occasion, stalked him as he stole out of the fowl-yard, and drove him from point to point behind the house till his only chance of escape was through a narrow archway between the back garden and our front entrance. Up this he rushed at full

speed, but had hardly got through when he was met and laid out by a smashing blow on the skull from my father's patriarchal staff, as we called it. He was qualifying for a crosier at the time, and when he believed that he had slain the enemy he relented, exclaiming, 'The poor brute! Get a spade, boys, and at any rate let us give him a decent burial.' But the great white dog gave a shiver, slowly opened one knowing eye and then another, rolled on to his feet, and suddenly bolted down the avenue for all he was worth. He never visited us again.

We once sub-let Parknasilla to a tenant who gave notice after a while on the ground that the house was haunted. My father sent on the letter of complaint to Mr. Bland, who shortly afterwards replied from Derryquin Castle that he had settled the affair satisfactorily. Listening one night to the screaming and clattering that were going on above the alarmed tenants, he made up his mind as to their cause. 'I'll lay your ghosts for you, sir, if you'll wait up an hour longer for me.' Off he went, and did not return, as perhaps the terrified occupant expected, with Father Walsh and his bell, book and candle, but with a set of well-seasoned ferrets. Climbing the ladder that led to the loft, he put them into a hole communicating with the roof-space above, and after a few moments the screaming and clattering noises broke out more violently than ever. Then the ferrets crawled back, badly bitten, but dourly dragging between them a pair of mastered marten-cats.

My favourite sport was trout fishing. My father

taught me how to prepare a cast and throw a fly, and I used to practice upon the lawn in front of Parknasilla under his supervision. But I never reached anything like his expertness as a fisherman, for I could not, like him, sit down on the river bank and successfully manufacture a fresh fly after observing the natural fly upon the water. I fished for the love of it, undeterred by a poor catch, though in Kerry one rarely had an absolutely blank day, as the trout fisherman has other delights than the sport on which he is engaged.

In Kerry these delights were multiplied. While the purl of the water soothed the ear, the eye would feed upon the beautiful diversities of river scenery as the stream was followed towards its source; crystal and clouded freshets, dark and lustrous pools fringed with flowering water-plants, or guarded by willows and alders nodding and crisping in the breeze. Then would come a stretch of marsh white with bog-cotton and, as the fisherman mounted to higher ground, patches of pink ling, heather and gorse, until the dark ravine was reached from which the stream issued. Wordsworth once told my Uncle Robert that if you wished to see such a countryside aright you should follow one of its beautiful streams through wood and vale and upland to the mountain-side where it had its source.

The solitariness of fishing in such a county as Kerry, where one may ply the rod for hours without seeing a human being or any other fisher but a lonely heron, was an attraction to one of my temperament. When successful, moreover, I needed no gallery, and when I bungled with my rod or landing-net I was

without carping critics. If the trout were not rising, a congenial book would pass the time till they grew hungry again.

Toby Butler, Mr. Bland's water-bailiff on the Owreagh, who possessed an almost uncanny knowledge of the fly-fancies of the salmon on that stream, always came out of his cottage when we went fishing past it with some sage piece of advice as to the best flies to use. As a consequence of this, my father once made a bag of three salmon and a considerable number of white trout on a single forenoon. For my own part I contented myself with brown trout fishing, which gave me more ground to cover, but I once caught a nine pound salmon with a trout rod on Lake Cloonee.

On our side of the Sneem mountains there were three lakes which we were in the habit of fishing, Drum-tine, and lower and upper Comeen Cna. The last of the three is almost surrounded by rocks or heather ridges, and therefore a difficult lake to fish satisfactorily; but the lower lake, which contained larger trout, was even harder to negotiate. It was almost inaccessible except in the driest weather, owing to the treacherous bog-land, and the high, thick reeds which shut it in. As a rule I left that lake to my father, and was more than once astonished at the way in which he managed to throw a long line over the reed-tops while perched upon a quaking tussock, and then swing a heavy trout back again to his side.

The water-bailiff O'Connor was responsible for the upper waters of the Sneem river and for Drum-tine. He had been a small farmer by the riverside, and had

got into such difficulties that he was a quarter's rent in arrears, when one day his landlord, Mr. Bland, gave a call at his cottage as he was fishing up the river. A flood was on, and O'Connor undertook to carry Bland, who was a big man, across. When the two reached mid-stream O'Connor suddenly began to stagger. 'What's the matter with you, my man?' asked Mr. Bland. 'Oh master, the legs is goin' under me, for it's wake I am for the want of food, an' I'm afeared I'll have to let ye go. But maybe I'll get ashore wid ye yet, if——' and O'Connor hesitated. 'If what, my man?' 'If ye'd only forgive me the little one-quarter's rent – and if ye's don't I fear we must go down together!' Mr. Bland, who had a keen sense of the ridiculous, felt that he was at O'Connor's mercy, and that to strain the quality of his own by temporising would have been unwise, so he handsomely forgave him the quarter's rent, and was borne in safety across the river.

My father and I had our own encounter with O'Connor. He was carrying the landing-net and a basket containing our lunch together with a couple of bottles of Guinness. When the time came to eat, the trout were rising so freely that we swallowed something in haste, and hurried back to our fishing. We returned hungrily a couple of hours later to finish our meal, but found nothing left in the basket. On being asked to explain, O'Connor replied: 'You've heard tell, yer honour, of the vinomous bull that there is in these parts. Well, when I landed that big trout for you under the Fall I left the basket behind me, an' whin I went

back for it afterwards what should I see but that bull tearin' away at the sangwiches he was after dragging out of it.' 'But how about the Guinness, O'Connor?' queried my father. 'Did he take the corks out of the two bottles and then finish them?' 'Bedad, Doctor, he was equal to that itself – and' looking at the bottle – 'glory be to God, if he hasn't corked thim up again after emptyin' the both of thim!' The story got about, and during the rest of our time he was known through all the countryside as 'The Bull.'

A party of four rods, we started early one morning across the Sneem mountains to fish a chain of lakes that lay beyond them. We had a gossoon of our own with us, and on the way we impressed a young peasant known as Laidir, the Irish for 'Strong,' owing to his great physical powers.

He carried all our baskets strapped round his mighty young person, and greatly entertained us on our way over the mountain pass by his droll remarks and pleasant stories. Then, as he was leading us downhill, his foot slipped and he fell head foremost down the mountainside, rolling over and over till he reached the foot of a steep incline. We hurried to his rescue, but, though the blood was spouting from his nose and ears, he shook himself like a terrier, sat up smiling, and finally rose to his feet and led the way once more. When we stood looking down upon the lakes, from whose shores we intended to fish, as there were no boats upon them, he drew me aside and whispered, 'Let them and their gossoon go down to the big lakes. There's another over the shoulder of the

hill where there's a fine chance of a good fishin' wind.'

When we reached the small upper lake I saw a sight which made my heart bound. In a pleasant southerly breeze trout were rising over it in such numbers, that it looked as if a shower of pebbles had been flung far and wide over the surface. 'Laidir!' I cried, 'Off with you and see if they're only sporting, or if not, what's the fly they're after.' Away he ran, and was back in a few minutes with his hands full of a large, red, long-legged, weak-winged insect, which I never remembered to have seen before, and have never to my knowledge seen since. I had no hooks ready for the natural fly, but put one of these strange insects over each of the flies on my cast, hurried to a promontory jutting out into the deep water of the lake, and threw in. What followed was simply a battue of trout. When I had caught fifty, a message came from the lake below asking me to come down for lunch. I replied, 'I will come down when I have caught five dozen' – and was as good as my word.

Laidir went with me, but stopped for a little before we left the lake, and taking up the last trout I had caught, which was still alive, asked me in a hesitating voice, 'Would yer honour mind givin' me jus' this one little trout?' 'Certainly, Laidir,' said I. 'But for you I'd not have this basketful. You can have half a dozen if you like.' 'No, yer honour, the one's all I want.' On which he took the trout and slipped it back into the water. It lay on its back for a moment or so, then turned and swam away. 'What did you do that for, Laidir?' I asked. 'Well, yer honour, the good God

saved my life when I had that bad fall away back yonder, and so I wisht to save the life of one of His other creatures.'

Warned by the time of day, for it was early in September and the Sneem mountains are difficult to cross after dark at that time of year, we took down our rods and started for home. When we reached the place of Laidir's accident he stopped and ejaculated, 'Well! Glory be to God! that I'm not walking back across the mountains, a dead man!'

Besides the more common song-birds, bullfinches, goldfinches, owls, jays, herons and other water-birds were to be encountered in our part of Kerry. The water-birds were often remarkably tame, and showed this not only in such more remote haunts as the Skelligs. I once threw a round stone at a seagull in a sloping field on the Sneem road, and was much ashamed when the bird treated my unfriendly action as if it had been a playful one. Dodging the stone he followed it as it rolled downhill, like a kitten after a ball.

Owls built in the ivied eaves of Parknasilla, and their snoring noises alarmed our visitors at night. Young owls objectionable to their parents were sometimes turned out of the nest and picked up by us on the gravel below. One such little foundling became a pet of ours. It was kept for a time with clipped wings, and proved as successful as a cat in keeping down mice. Once I saw the little creature catch and kill with its sharp claws a bat that we were chasing, as it flew under the dining-room table.

Often and often I have seen the heron perched upon

the shore watching patiently for a rock-fish to come along and then spitting it with his sharp beak, or eel-fishing above the stream that at low water ran right down Goleen Rivee, a creek which separated the Bland property from ours.

I also paid attention to the Goleen Rivee eels, for we have found a fresh-water eel cunningly prepared for the hook a deadly bait for pollack or mackerel. This part of my father's grounds was a favourite haunt of my brother Arnold and myself in our younger days. There we gathered shells and made slate saws with which to hack through the brambles and willows that obstructed our bower amid the sloe-bushes. Here we loved to concoct strange brews of sloe and blackberry juice, to be drunk out of large cockle or limpet shells. Here, too, rushed the pig who objected to being ringed, leaping incontinently from a rock into the sea, and wildly swimming out into the bay where he would have found a watery grave had not a boat got out just in time to save his bacon. The rock from which he plunged was known as Pig Rock thenceforward.

Once as I was gathering shell-fish for our sea lines I caught sight of a huge cockle at a little distance from me upon the strand. I was walking in its direction when a shadow passed in front of me, and a moment afterwards I saw a bird pounce upon the very cockle that I had been making for myself. To my astonishment the interloper proved to be out of his reckoning. He did not fly off with his cockle. The cockle had snapped to just in time, and was holding the bird's beak as in a vice. I ran forward, and taking up the two

found that the assailant was a blackbird, and that he had been gripped by the cockle above the air-hole in his beak, and was suffocating in consequence.

I slipped the cockle's hold so as to leave the blackbird free to breathe, and, abandoning my bait-hunting, carried the two together up to Parknasilla for my father's astonished inspection.

A few years afterwards I told this tale to Frank Buckland, then one of the Inspectors of Fisheries under the Home Department. 'That was strange,' he said, 'but I can go one better. You let your blackbird go, but when I found a corncrake killed by the clutch of an oyster I put them both, still attached to one another, safe into spirits of wine, and there they are still, to witness if I lie!'

Not far from our sloe-bushes there grew upon a grassy headland a real delicacy, though quite unknown to the Kerry native – the very best of samphire. It was not with us as upon the Dover cliff described in *King Lear*, where—

'The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles; half-way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire, dreadful trade!'

The store upon which we drew in the early summer, gathering, pickling and bottling it, and doing full justice to it in vacation times, was easily accessible. Nothing made Limerick ham fly like our pickled samphire.

Close to Samphire Point was the boat-house, a gloomy stone building large enough to house two long-boats at a time. Into this boat-house, when locked, I

loved to climb, shrimp-net in hand, to catch the prawns with which after half-tide it was often full; more especially when unused bait had been thrown from a boat into the water. When without a net, I had ways of my own for catching these prawns. One was to lower my left hand with an unshelled cockle in it, and when the prawn was engaged upon this to bring the thumb and first finger of my right hand very gradually up to the feeding prawn, close them quietly upon its feelers, and then draw it steadily up out of the water.

At the upper end of the creek, a narrow sound between our shore and the island of Ilaunakilla, there was a rustic bridge by which we crossed to the island. Here kingfishers built their nests, and on halcyon summer days we would see these beautiful birds flashing up and down the waterway and in and out of the surrounding foliage. Both sides of the creek were thickly wooded with holly, silver birch and mountain ash, while the quay near the bridge was faced by an avenue of pines and Scotch fir which led up to Parknasilla.

One autumn afternoon I saw my sister Helen standing upon the bridge lost in the loveliness of her surroundings, and thereupon wrote these lines, which I think fairly describe the scene and her sense of its beauty:

She leant upon the rustic bridge
  With all her spirit in her eyes;
Far-off the mountains ridge on ridge
  Flowed westward through the autumn skies.

The blue sea kissed its golden weeds,
  In wreaths the blue smoke took the air;
Flushed was the forest, green the meads:
  She sighed, O earth, is Heaven more fair?

Ilaunakilla was a favourite haunt of ours. At low water we bathed from the end of it opposite to the boat-house. When the tide was up we either jumped in from under the cover of a holly-bush half-way up the creek, or from a little grassy knoll close to the quay, whence our turf-boats started empty for the bog, and whither they returned laden with peat. My father taught us boys to swim with life-belts about us in deeper and still deeper water, and finally to leap into it when it was beyond our depth. Every day he reduced the air in the belts, until at last it was all gone. Then he explained to us that as we could now swim quite easily with what had become an actual encumbrance round our waists, we should find it much more easy to do so without our belts.

He taught my sisters to swim by means of a huge fishing-rod with a strong line attached to their waists. We thus became a good swimming family, and able to cut all manner of capers in the water. On one boating expedition with a party of neighbours, the young men and boys went to bathe on one side of a foreland, the young women and girls on the other; for this was before the time of mixed bathing. On our side of the point a competition in wild-cat headers was going on, and when my turn came I ran at full speed to the jumping-off place and cut what might

well have been my last caper on earth. Instead of coming up to the surface at once, as I intended, I found my head jammed under a deep shelf of sea-weedy rock, with every likelihood of its remaining there permanently. However, I got my eyes well open, and with bursting lungs succeeded in struggling out of my under-water prison back to the air. Here I was greeted by a loud cheer for having achieved a record under-water dive, but I thought it kinder to my family not to divulge its involuntary nature.

We sometimes practised swimming in old clothes, so as to be prepared to save life if the need occurred. One day the boat in which Rosamund had been rowing was capsized in a squall. I plunged in fully-dressed, and swam the sound only to find Rosamund reading a novel behind a rock on the opposite shore, unconscious of the fact that she had moored her punt so indifferently that the incoming tide had overturned it and swept it away oarless in my direction.

While rowing our skiff past Silvy Downey's Island, with my brother Charles, then a boy of eleven or twelve, as my cox, I once heard violent barking above me, accompanied by strong cursing in Irish, and saw a sheep, chased by a dog, leap into the sea, though its front legs had been spanselled together to prevent escape. The dog, the object of his master's curses, and evidently a tyro at his shepherding business, remained prudently at the water's edge and left the part of rescuer to me. Jim Downey, his master, seemed equally disinclined for that service; nor was this to be wondered at, for the water was rough and deep, and

there was a draw upon the rock which made help even on my part a difficult operation. Young Charles steered me skilfully up to the drowning sheep. I got my two hands under its belly just in the nick of time, and managed to hoist the poor beast on to my shoulder and plump it into the middle of the boat. I then rowed it round to a safe landing-place on the leeward side of the island, and handed it over to Downey. On mentioning this yarn to my sons Charles and John not long ago as the only occasion on which I had saved a life from drowning, they surprised me by indignantly denying that my only salvage of the kind had been a mere sheep. John declared that when he was swept under our Harlech bathing-raft by a big wave, before he could swim, he had clung under water to my leg, and so been rescued; while Charles asserts that when he was drawn under a fall on the river Isar in Bavaria, in which we were bathing together, I got him safe on shore. This shows that when one reaches a certain time of life earlier memories are more persistent than later ones.

On the occasion of the visit of the Channel Fleet, I took our pinnace and six men across to Ardgroom. We had to walk four miles across country to reach Castletown, where I was entertained by naval friends. After seeing all that was to be seen, I went to look up my men; but when at last I found them, they were one and all 'very happy in themselves' as the phrase went. Time was passing, and I began to fear that unless I could bring them back to Ardgroom a little before nightfall we might find it hard to get out into

the bay in safety, as there are some ugly sunken rocks at the entrance to the harbour. I warned them that I was bound to cross the river before dark, and would leave any of them behind who were unfit to row. Then I started for Ardgroom at a good jog-trot, the men streeling after me along the road in very ragged order. There were a few falls by the way, but we did our four miles in thirty-five minutes by my watch, the men all sweated sober by their run and the fear of being left behind if they failed to make the pace. We reached Ardgroom just in time for me to steer our boat safely out of the harbour. But our troubles were not over, for it had begun to blow strongly from the bay mouth, and I had to keep the nose of our none too sea-worthy boat against the rising waves. This meant taking a very slow and circuitous course till, to our immense relief, we got safely under the lee of Sherkey Island, and were then able to paddle quietly home.

Writing of rowing reminds me of a regatta once held in the bay opposite Derryquin Castle. There were some half a dozen yachts, owned by local gentry, entered for it, and perhaps as many long-boats competing, from the Blands' whale-boat and ours to the revenue cutter's galley. But the races that were most popular were those between the village fishing and turf boats, the latter double-banked by the sturdy, shouting owners and their friends. However, the most lively piece of rowing to which we were treated was the duck-hunt. Mr. Townsend Trench, or 'Towny Trench' as he was called, was 'a great duck entirely' in the opinion of us all, and especially that of

the ladies. A fine figure of a man he surely was, good-looking, with a pair of thick-lashed grey eyes, grave or humorous, and with not an ounce of superfluous flesh on his muscular frame as he sat in his punt ready for the signal to start. It was given, and he was soon darting in and out of the boats that beset his way, hugging the half-tide rock so closely that his pursuers had to give way for fear of running aground. Then he dodged back, now rowing, now back-watering with a strong man-o'-war's stroke, until, seeing his opportunity, he flew home with feathered oars, still uncaught.

Trench figures conspicuously in a brilliant book of Irish reminiscences written by his father, Mr. Stuart Trench, Lord Lansdowne's Kerry agent, whom he succeeded in that capacity. An account of his adventures with seals, whose lair was in a cave into which he had swum, is one of the most thrilling chapters in the book. He was indeed an unusual man, excelling in all kinds of manly sports, and mentally many-sided as well. His impressionist sketches of Kerry scenery in charcoal showed that he possessed high artistic talent. He was full of every new idea or invention that came along, was the first to ride a bicycle in our county, and when the Kerry parsons in our neighbourhood had grown inactive, he started prayer-meetings and lay-preaching, in company with Mr. Bland, Mahony of Dromore, and Crosbie of Ardfert. My father warned these friends of his, all Irish Churchmen, of the consequences that their new religious zeal were likely to entail unless guarded by discretion. They protested, however, that they only desired to reanimate

their Church, not to desert it. But before long they did so, and joined the sect of the Plymouth Brethren, which at that time was gaining strength in Ireland. All of the four became active preachers of this earnest but narrow belief, and drew away to their services not a few of our small Sneem congregation.

Bland up to this point was an engaging, easy-going squire, yet a not inactive landlord. He now spent a great deal of his time away from home, largely in England, preaching his new Gospel up and down the country, and leaving his tenants in the hands of an inefficient agent. Derryquin and Dromore Castles lost their old gaiety; their elders ceased to be intimate with ours, and even the relations between the young Blands and ourselves were clouded.

There was a curious cult of the Turkish Bath amongst the Kerry Plymouth Brethren; I once took one at the Crosbies of Ardfert Abbey. After I had been in it for a few minutes, the bath attendant, who proved to be the Crosbies' butler, suddenly asked me if my soul was saved. Not acknowledging my pained silence to mean consent, he began to preach earnestly to me on the subject, and did not cease until washing operations began.

General Greathead, a hero of the Indian Mutiny, had hardly got into his second course at a dinner at Dromore Castle when Mahony's sister-in-law, Miss Waller, asked him what was the state of his soul. 'But I'm taking turbot,' he innocently replied. He soon found out what she was after, and had to submit to her sisterly interest in his salvation till the ladies

left. When the men followed them to the drawing-room, he bolted out into the Castle grounds with his pipe, and remained there till he thought the rest of the company had gone to bed. Then he sneaked in by the back door and stole up towards his room; when he reached the passage that led to it, all the other bedroom doors upon it were suddenly flung open by their occupants, who, with lighted candles in their hands, received the hapless General with a hymn which warned him to 'Flee from the wrath to come!' This he did before the others came down to breakfast next morning.

Such extraordinary pertinacity in enquiring into the state of other people's souls reached its limit when a Miss Minnie Stokes who was on a visit to us at the time took the opportunity, when the rest of the family were out of the way, to importune our dear old Grand-Aunt Annie – a saint if ever there was one – to say she was 'saved.' She followed her up and down the room, urging her over and over again to make the declaration, and growing so excited that the old lady was nearly frightened out of her wits. 'I told her,' she afterwards explained, 'that I hoped I was saved, but that I had not the assurance to say so.' To which Miss Stokes replied, 'Yes, it's just the assurance you want, and if you will only say right out, "I am saved," you certainly must be!'

But even the Plymouth Brethren will sometimes make humorous capital out of the regenerate. When Spurgeon was visiting a household of that sect in Kildare, and was engaged in family prayers with them,

he had to listen to a petition being put up to the Almighty on his behalf in some such terms as these: 'And that it may please Thee to chasten the pride and self-importance of our beloved brother and guest now upon his knees before Thy footstool.'

We were but summer residents in Ballybog, as we had begun to call our neighbourhood; yet even we found it hard to suffer gladly the Rev. Arthur Vincent Watson, Vicar of Kilcrohane, though my father did his utmost to keep that unfortunate man upon his feet. Watson was connected with a respectable Limerick family, and had his good points. He was a big, handsome fellow, open-handed enough to the peasantry about him, and even popular with them on that account; while his liability to occasional fits of insanity was in his favour – not because it put him at a disadvantage as a Protestant pastor with their parish priest, but because they had a superstitious feeling about those whose reason is unsound. From what afterwards came to light I make no doubt that Watson's mental attacks were brought on by fits of hard drinking. His beautiful wife was devoted to him, and had great influence over him. Whenever he began to grow queer, she used to spirit him across the Sneem mountains to a cottage of their own on the upper Waterville Lake and keep him there till he had completely recovered. At first his seizures were few and far between, and during that time my father once succeeded in inducing him to read good sermons from a volume he had lent him, in place of the wild extempore addresses to which he had been in the habit of treating us. For a while he got

up these written sermons with great care, committing them to memory and delivering them as if they were his own. But one Sunday, perhaps shortly before a visit to his cottage across the mountains, Watson got up into the pulpit, opened my father's book of sermons, evidently at random, and preached one that put the whole congregation into a state of suppressed excitement. The tenour of it was that a wealthy parishioner famous for her good work had left a large part of her fortune for certain parochial charities quite unfamiliar to any of us. The character of this modern Dorcas was dwelt upon at extreme length, and we were finally exhorted to follow in her blessed footsteps. When we got into the churchyard, my father was plied on all sides with enquiries as to the identity of our benefactress, and how it was that we had never heard before about these mysterious local charities. The cat was out of the bag, and my father thought it safer to let Mr. Watson return to his own ill-considered sermons. But the poor man became worse and worse, and I can well believe this story of Murty Shea's about his old master:

'Once when I was with Parson Watson he took it into his head that I was his horse. A strong man he was, and is, and the madness made him the stronger, and when he caught and collared and bitted and bridled me, and drove me up and down the study, leathering me like blazes on the back and legs with his big riding-whip, what do you think I could do at all at all? Not much, Master Alfred – but I did something to get my own back again.' 'And what was that,

Murty?' 'I began to call out at him in a very hollow voice. "Parson Watson," says I, "a great change is coming over you!" "The horse is speaking," says he to himself, "and that's a strange thing! And what may the change be?" says he. "Just this," I answered him, "you are surely turning into me, and I am as surely turning into you. Don't you feel the change coming?" says I, staring hard at him. "Indeed and I think I do," says he, dropping the whip and reins and easing my mouth of the bit and bridle. "And I'm sartin sure of it," says I, snatching them up. "Whoa there! Whoa there! Roddy" – which was the name of the parson's horse. And he stood stock still while I saddled and bridled and bitted him, just as he had treated me. And if I didn't jump on his back and lambaste him round the room like fury, may I never taste bite or sup agin!' 'And did that tame him, Murty?' 'It did, yer honour. In the end I let him go, and he went up to his bed as quiet as a lamb, and woke up in the morning quite well and hearty in himself.'

By this time my father had become Bishop of the United Diocese of Limerick, Ardfert and Aghadoe; and as Kilcrohane was an Ardfert parish, Watson had become one of his clergy. My father would naturally have been glad to remove Watson elsewhere, but he held a Crown living, and had not so far been guilty of any open misdemeanour, his drunkenness having been kept from public observation by his good wife. Then Watson got into open trouble with John Downs, one of his churchwardens, and in a fit of drunkenness horse-whipped him, John finally beating

DOCTOR GRAVES
Bishop of Limerick

him off with an oar. Watson drove home on his outside car, again refreshed himself, and reappeared, this time in his night-shirt, but armed with a gun and a large axe, and started felling trees and throwing them across the road at the far side of my father's property. In this way he raised a barricade which interrupted all traffic, and stood defending it with his loaded gun. Later on, when he began to feel somewhat chilly, he remounted his car and, still *sans culottes*, drove back, to his parsonage on the hill.

My father had now good reason for 'silencing' Watson and putting another clergyman in his place, and this he succeeded in doing. One cowardly parting shot the mad fellow took against him. Knowing my father was over in England, he drove down one evening to our door to give us what he called 'The sad intelligence that your worthy father the Bishop has suddenly dropped down dead in London.' It was an atrocious lie, but a disturbing one, till we had received a return telegram 'All well' in answer to our enquiry on the following day.

When the Irish Church was disestablished and disendowed Watson received several thousand pounds from the Commutation Fund and retired to Kenmare, where he set up house with his poor faithful wife. He laid up a great store of provisions and liquor, drank himself mad, and in that condition went prowling round the house gun in hand, till one evening he saw something moving at the back, shouted out, 'A deer, by God!' and fired. There was a scream, and the maid-servant ran out to find Mrs. Watson lying mortally

wounded in the back yard. The police were called in and asked her who shot her, but she only shook her head. Her husband, who was really deeply attached to her, was sobered by the shock, and she died with his hand in hers, murmuring, 'Poor Arthur, poor Arthur.' Watson ended his days in a criminal lunatic asylum, though he swore when he was put into it, that the first thing he would do when he came out would be to shoot Bishop Graves.

My father had a succession of stewards, just and unjust, Protestant and Catholic, Orangemen and Nationalists. One of these, Johnson by name, was a dour northerner. He was a hard worker, and got good work out of my father's labourers when he was standing over them, but very little when he was not; and towards the end of his career my father had begun to suspect him of neglect of duty. After dropping drink for a year he had begun to take to it again; but he had a very strong head, and though as a rule he kept it when out of doors, it sometimes gave way at home, and when it did his temper, none of the best at any time, gave way too. Nor was it a case of hard head and soft heart with him, for he began to beat his wife and children. One of my sisters and a girl friend of hers, who heard the hullabaloo going on during these beatings from Johnson's cottage, which faced the high-road, determined to create a diversion. Off they went for a pot of green paint, with which one of our men had been at work on the front gate. Then they filled their pockets with windfall apples from our orchard, and as soon as they saw Johnson safe down the

road for a fresh visit to the public-house, they made their way to his pig-sty. Keeping the pig employed over the windfalls, they went to work with their two brushes of green paint, till the Orangeman's pig was 'wearing the Green' from snout to tail. They then put up a placard at Johnson's gate, with this invitation, in their best capital letters: 'This way to the Green Pig.' Johnson did not see the notice on his return at night, and his wife and daughters were taking refuge from him in a neighbouring cottage, so the murder was not out till the morning. The two plotters had carefully timed their announcement so that it might meet the eyes of the public on their way to Mass the next morning. Johnson was waked from his heavy sleep by shouts of laughter from the people, who were staring delightedly at the pig – 'Green as jealousy itself,' as one of them described it. Johnson, of course, never suspected who were responsible for the practical joke, but it had a steadying effect upon him.

Immediately opposite the grounds of Parknasilla stood Hollywood, and between it and the road a small lake, which was regarded as a holy one. The waters were believed to possess miraculous power, and people used to come long distances to dip children and themselves in it when suffering from sores. Part of the procedure was to tie up the rags which covered their sores upon the surrounding bushes after their ablutions, with very disfiguring effect upon the surroundings. Yet the owner of Hollywood kindly tolerated the nuisance. Now when we started a laundry at Parknasilla we got permission from the Hydes, who

lived in Hollywood, to draw water from the lake, which was filled by a stream from above, through pipes into our orchard, where the laundry stood. Johnson undertook this task, and carried it through with great determination, though we found afterwards that feeling had been created by using the holy water of the lake for Protestant washing. He was threatened with spiritual pains and penalties for his sacrilegious action; and curiously enough he was unlucky after his work was done. Measles assailed his children, and he broke his leg. But whether his taking to drink followed his laying down of the pipes I cannot remember. But we young people were not sorry when we parted company with him, not long after the incident of 'The Green Pig.'

Two distinguished antiquaries visited my father in these days: The Abbé Domenec and Sir James Simpson, of anæsthetic fame, and he took both of them in turn to Staigue Fort, that famous stone enclosure of unknown antiquity in the O'Connell country. At the foot of the immense fortification he showed them a flat rock from which the turf had been recently removed, disclosing a succession of 'dishy hollows,' connected by well-cut channels, which gave them fresh food for antiquarian thought.

My father has hazarded the conclusion that it was an old stone map of the country – the cups representing the circular forts with which it was dotted, the channels the roads that connected them.

The Abbé, who was a palmist, looked at my hand and pronounced it that of a centenarian, declaring

that he had never seen a longer line of life, turning the ball of the thumb. That would mean that I have still sixteen years to live before I fall three years short of the age of one of my ancestors, whose portrait confronts me daily. Sir James proved a most chivalrous guest; for happening to visit us on a day when we had a large influx of friends, he took three ladies in to lunch, one after the other, negotiated a fresh lunch of his own on each occasion, and seemed all the better for them afterwards.

CHAPTER VI

OLD TRINITY

Two dreams that came true – Sir John Mahaffy on Trinity College men – Imposing on the Dublin Press – Town and Gown rows – T.C.D. practical jokers – College friends – How I was taught to write verse – Recollections of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu – My father's friendship with Mendelssohn – His consecration as Bishop of Limerick – Some of his surprise visits to his clergy – Dean and Lady Augusta Stanley and the Stanfords at the Palace.

MEANTIME I had entered Trinity College, Dublin, of which my father was still a Fellow and lecturer. Together with Arnold, I took the examination on July 1st, 1864.

Term was over, and the examiners for the entrance prizes, went off upon their summer holidays without reporting upon them.

Three months later, the results being still unannounced, I dreamt that as I went into college some one slapped me suddenly on the back and said: 'Graves, I congratulate you on having got the English Literature Prize.' 'How do you know?' I asked. 'Why,' he said, 'you can see for yourself,' pointing to the glazed 'records' case in the entrance archway. I went over to it and found it empty – and then awoke in a state of botheration.

'That's odd,' said my father when I told my dream, 'for the night before I entered college your Aunt Clara dreamt that I was given a "premium." We hooted at your aunt, for premiums, as prizes were then called, were never offered for this examination. But when my *viva voce* in Virgil was over, the examiner said, "Wait here, young man, for a few moments," left the hall, and shortly returned with a fine edition of Virgil with which he presented me, saying that I had done the best examination in it be remembered, and that he hoped this would encourage me to stick to my Classics.'

Cheered by this reminiscence I went down to college; and had no sooner passed the Porter's Lodge than my Mathematical tutor, Murray, slapped me on the back and congratulated me on having got my prize. 'But where shall I see the result?' I asked. 'Oh, I suppose in the usual place,' he replied, and pointed to the glass 'records' cases.

I looked into the case in vain, and was growing troubled when another friend hailed me with the same news. 'How do you know about it?' I asked. 'The results are not in the glass case.' 'I know that!' he said. 'You will find them on Barlow's door' – and there, in a list pinned on to the door of my examiner, Dr. Barlow, the father of Jane Barlow, the Irish story-teller, I found that his congratulations and Murray's were justified.

No stranger in Dublin could fail to be attracted by the massive front of Trinity College in the greatest thoroughfare of our faded capital. Noble statues of Burke and Goldsmith stand before the gate. Ussher

and Berkeley and Grattan are in the hall. The buildings, too, are of the type that was common when Dublin was the seat of Government and the home of a resident nobility. The library has not its equal among library buildings in England; and the Provost's house looks like the town residence of an English nobleman.

But when it was built, the Provost was a great man in a capital city. He owed his appointment to the Government, and might be a member of the Ministry; while the Senior Fellows on the University Board were men of wealth and importance who, under the direction of the Provost, controlled great estates and advised him on the appointments to rich livings. Designed as an outpost of Elizabethan Protestantism in Ireland, Trinity began in 1793 to admit Catholics to her Degrees, and gradually to all her prizes. She was meant to be a *Mater Universitatis* with many colleges, but, like Aaron's serpent rod, Trinity College has swallowed up the other halls, and like Harvard imposes its laws and even its name on the whole University. The Provost and Fellows of Trinity could not be legally married until Queen Victoria ascended the throne. Yet they were constantly breaking the law, to the great scandal of the University, and I myself knew Senior Fellows whose wives were introduced into Society before the year '37 by their maiden names. However, two or three bachelor Fellows, my father amongst them, got a Memorial signed by the heads of the University, and very appropriately presented it to the Queen about the time of her own marriage, asking for the abolition of the

Celibacy Statute, a petition which she graciously granted.

'Trinity College men,' wrote Sir John Mahaffy, one of her ablest Provosts to whom I am indebted for much of this information, 'may not be, as a rule, as polished as an Oxford or Cambridge man, but there is a rough strength about them that atones for other deficiencies. As Irishmen, they are fluent talkers, and as Trinity College men they are independent talkers, free to utter their opinions, not guided by precedent, differing readily, even from their teachers. A man is judged by his conversation, by his ability to take in new ideas, by a thousand things which cannot be enumerated, but which are taken as evidence against all artificial tests if they disagree with his critics' rough-and-ready ones. So, too, among the Fellows. They criticise one another openly and readily, but always with perfect honesty. Some years ago the Fellows criticised one another so severely that they almost put a stop to any of their body publishing books. Every unfortunate author was so sifted and pulled to pieces, that it required a man of very thick skin to brave their shafts. But the stranger who dines at the Fellows' table and enters the Common Room is, I believe, pleased with the vigour and liveliness of the conversation.'

My private tutor and friend was Robert Yelverton Tyrrell, afterwards the famous Classical scholar, with whom I once took a great walking excursion through the county Wicklow.

When we reached Roundtown we were disappointed to find that the hostess of its principal inn, famous for

her strange use of the Queen's English, had passed away, and so we were not saluted by such greetings as these: 'Good-day, gents from Dub, what can I do for you? Will you have beef, mutt or chick?'

But we were well looked after, and at a more reasonable rate than at the Wooden Bridge Hotel, where we had to pay 7s. 6d. each for new-laid eggs and lamb cutlets.

In revenge I composed a parody on Tennyson's *Charge of the Six Hundred*, which ended:

'Oh! the vile charge they made –
Wherefore we stopped and stayed
Each of us wondered.'

Tyrrell was much apter in Latin:

'*Sublicius nos Pons agnina accepit et ovis;*
Sublicii Pontis nil nisi nomen erat.
Pons mutat lapides lignis, ut in hospite mentem
Excipit humanam saxea durities.'

This tendency to skits was common in old Trinity days. My brother Jack once imposed upon the Dublin Press with a description of an archæological find in Northern Italy. It was couched in the form of a letter telling how the writer was wandering on the banks of the river Po when an excited native of the name of Guiseppi Philippo rushed up to him exclaiming, 'Signor, I have found a pot with an inscription upon it.'

The inscription ran as follows:

FORTIC SVM SVMMI GENITORIC FILIVS IPSE
HANC PATERAM TRIBVIT IVLIA FLAVA MIHI
ATQVE EXCONCAVIT RODBERTULA MULTA LVBENTER
TAVPO TRACTORVM PECTORIS ECCE JACENT.

Some of the letters of this inscription were considered doubtful, and therefore put in brackets; and the readers of the Dublin paper, amongst whom it was hoped there were archæologists of repute, were requested to act as interpreters – and sure enough some attempts were made, but all in vain. However, we who were in the secret were well able to furnish a correct translation of the inscription. 'I am the gallant son of a highly distinguished ancestor, the yellow-haired Julia presented me with this pot, and at the same time she shelled out a liberal number of bobs. You can see them over there on the top of the chest of drawers!'

Two of my uncles, John and Charles Cheyne, were students at Trinity College at the time that my father was reading for a Scholarship. They were not great reading men themselves though Charles became ultimately a distinguished Civil Engineer and planned some of the great railway bridges in the Punjab.

Charles Lever and Magee, later Archbishop of York, were friends of theirs, and, like them, given to practical jokes. My uncle Charles and Magee were walking down Sackville Street, now 'O'Connell Street,' together when they noticed a baker's cart standing close to the pavement. My uncle saw that the driver was standing on tip-toe with his head thrust into the cart, evidently about to bring out some rolls for an expectant customer. He accordingly whispered to Magee, who jumped up upon the box and took the reins, whilst my uncle caught the driver by the heels, pushed him in amongst his load of bread, shut the door, and jumped up beside

Magee, who at once drove off at full speed until he reached the gate of Trinity College. He called upon the gate porter to let him in, which the porter did, being too much taken aback to contest the passage, and the two friends drove their booty into the middle of the old square. There they held an auction of the contents of the bread-cart, after first releasing the driver, who recovered his equanimity when the proceeds of the auction, which showed a handsome profit in his favour, were handed over to him.

John Cheyne, my other uncle, was Lever's particular friend, and according to family tradition was the original of Charles O'Malley. He emigrated to Australia, where he became the father of an immense family. My uncle Charles just missed making a fortune at the beginning of his professional career. A railway over which he and Charles Hemans, Felicia's son, had charge was being constructed between Limerick and Clare. It was passing through early Irish historic ground, the territory of the royal family of O'Brien. My father advised him therefore to purchase from the Government the right to all treasure trove in the district, which he did. A remarkable store of old gold ornaments, almost priceless in value, was afterwards discovered by the workmen; but both my uncle and Hemans had been called up to Dublin for the time being, and their subordinates made common cause with the workmen to smuggle it all away.

Some years afterwards these treasures, or what was left of them, began to find their way into Irish

Museums, for no doubt the greater number had been melted down, and it then leaked out how my uncle and Hemans had been duped. One of Lord Inchiquin's tenants who had taken in some of these stolen goods and hidden them in the thatch of his cottage went queer in the head and forgot all about them, so that they remained in the thatch until discovered by his successor. He brought them to Lord Inchiquin, who found them to be handsome gold ornaments evidently the buried property of one of his own O'Brien ancestors.

In my generation there were occasional Town and Gown rows, and before I entered Trinity there had been a desperate conflict of the kind, involving loss of life. The mounted police intervened and rode through the college gate into the area in front of the University, where they cut down several of the young University men. One of them, of the name of Leeson, I afterwards remember to have met, minus his scalp. Colonel Brown, who commanded the police, had a short-lived triumph. So furious were the townsmen with whom the gownsmen had been fighting at the ruthless conduct of the police, that they joined forces with the undergraduates led by Godfrey Pope, a Scholar, in an attempt to burn down the police barracks.

In that area of sanguinary struggle I remember listening to an oration by the Earl of Carlisle, famous as an orator, on the occasion of the unveiling by him of Foley's statue of Goldsmith. There again, when Edward VII as Prince of Wales visited Dublin with his new-made bride, the beautiful Princess

Alexandra, Arnold and I had the honour of being 'wanded' stewards beside the Royal carriage while the Royal pair were receiving an ovation from a good-natured and humorous Irish crowd in Nassau Street. One man climbed up on the railings in spite of the police. 'He's been badly brought up,' exclaimed a voice from the crowd. 'And the sooner he's taken down the better,' answered another. 'Which is the Duke of Teck?' someone else called out. 'Send for a detective,' came the reply.

For some reason or another it was feared that there would be an unpleasant scene at Kingsbridge Railway Station when the remains of the famous Irish rebel Smith O'Brien were passing through Dublin. This, though in no sense in sympathy with the Rebellion of '48, we undergraduates were extremely anxious to prevent, having had a high respect for the character of O'Brien. So we marched out in large numbers through Nassau Street to the station, and occupied it in reverent silence while O'Brien's coffin was being transferred from the hearse to the railway carriage which was to take it for burial to Limerick.

The only actual Town and Gown row that I recall was precipitated by the vagaries of a mad barrister of the name of Barnes, a great humorist with an astonishing gift of the gab, who was professing to stand for a Dublin constituency. He invaded Trinity College, and spoke in one of the quadrangles to a crowd of students, who in sheer fun cheered him to the echo and finally hoisted him on to the pedestal in front of

the college gate shortly to be occupied by the statue of Burke. We then took him down and carried him outside, upon which the mob fell foul of us, and we of the mob; Francis Edgeworth, with whom I was walking arm-in-arm, was badly mauled in one of the charges against us.

It seemed strange to look back upon that adventure when I again met Francis as Professor of Political Economy at Oxford. I had come up to see my son Robert, and Francis invited us both to a dinner at All Souls at which Colonel Lawrence of Arabian fame, then a Fellow of the College, was present. The Warden introduced me to Lawrence, who asked if I were any relation of Philip Graves. 'Only his father' I laughed, upon which he spoke handsomely of Philip's work in the Arab Bureau. This encouraged me to introduce him to Robert, with whom he soon made friends.

Queer stories used to be told of the earlier Fellows of Trinity. The most famous of these was Jacky Barrett. He had lived boxed up in his college rooms for years, and when he finally emerged country sights were curiously unfamiliar to him. He is said to have written an elaborate description of a bird, which he met on one of his country walks and believed must be the *Gallus Gallinaceus*, the first live barn-door cock he had ever seen. Somehow or other he got into difficulties towards the end of his college career and was threatened with an attempt on the part of a bum-bailiff to occupy his rooms. The college students of the day got to hear of this and came to his rescue, upon which he exclaimed, 'My dear boys, don't be too hard

on him – and whatever you do, don't nail his ear to the pump,' which they naturally proceeded to do.

Then there were the twins, William and Michael Roberts, or Billy and Micky as we called them. Billy was a good Classic, Micky a fine Mathematician; and they were said to have tossed up, as to which was to take the Fellowship Examination first. But they read for it together, and base rumour had it that Micky took the Mathematical papers for Billy and Billy took the Classical ones for Micky, with the result that they both became Fellows.

There was another pair of twins amazingly like one another in appearance; but one of them was much cleverer than his brother, and successfully personated him at a college examination. Shortly afterwards the duller twin got an attack of facial paralysis which differentiated him so clearly from his brother that he congratulated himself on the attack having come after the examination.

A bold impersonation was once carried out by Richard Edgeworth, the third of the four brothers of that name in my time. He had already obtained notoriety in the Medical School by making a bet that he would carry a coffin round the College Park. How he did it, whether on his shoulder or on his head, I do not know, but he was not interrupted by any of the college officials, and so won his gruesome wager. A great college function was due, to grant honorary degrees, and only a limited number of tickets were issued for the Examination Hall, where the ceremony was to take place. Richard Edgeworth had no claim

to a ticket, but his absent brother, Antonio, had. So he disguised himself with an artificial beard as Antonio, and called upon Mr. Miller, the Registrar, to claim a Scholar's ticket. Miller looked surprised at his sudden reappearance, but Edgeworth was equal to the occasion, observing, 'This room doesn't seem much changed, Mr. Miller, since I was last in it,' and chatting with apparent familiarity over his experiences in the American Civil War, in the course of which Antonio had acted as aide-de-camp to General Lee at the battle of Chancellorsville. Miller listened with great interest and handed him the ticket without demur.

For sheer nerve this story of Arnold would be hard to cap. The undergraduates of Trinity dined at the same time as the Fellows, who with their guests occupied a long table on the dais. When the meal had begun, the main door was locked by the porters and only reopened after the final Grace had been said. Our meal, being less elaborate than that of the Fellows, was always over first and an interval would follow before we were released. One evening the delay was far longer than usual, and the undergraduates began shuffling their feet as a hint to the Senior Fellow present. He took no notice, though the High Table had finished eating some time before and were only gossiping over their wine.

This was too much for Arnold. 'Come on boys' he cried, springing to his feet. 'Form a line!' A double line was formed stretching to the entrance. Down the middle Arnold charged straight for the locked door. Running at full speed he flung his right leg stiffly

forward and crashed into it beside the lock with his heel. It was an old trick of his for opening doors. The force of the impact burst the lock, and the whole crowd of us surged cheering out of the hall past the astonished porters. Fortunately for Arnold my father, who had not witnessed this scene, was on the College Board, or he would at least have been rusticated for a term. As it was, he was fined £5, to the intense annoyance of my father who had to pay it.

In 1866 my father was appointed Bishop of Limerick, and it was not until then that Arnold and I had rooms in Trinity. At first we roomed together, but afterwards we separated and I shared with Herbert Colthurst. Amongst my other friends in college were Hastings Crossley, Robert Carson, Stewart Woodhouse, Thomas Orpen, and Thomas Hime. But I was also intimate with the athletes: Barrington, Stritch, Baker, R. O. B. Lane, Brett, Standish O'Grady, Brennan, Mayne, and the two Palmers, several of whom combined brains with brawn, belonging as I did to the football, cricket and hockey teams.

I had begun to write verse some years before this and was fortunate in having two competent family critics; my father and my uncle Robert, who had been the personal friend of Wordsworth and Mrs. Hemans.

My father's method of criticism was of a summary nature. He read my boyish verses, talked them over with me at the time, and then invariably put them into the fire, with the observation: 'You will do better next time!'

This process of cremation went on for several years,

till one day, when I was about fifteen years old, he put a set of my verses not into the fire but into his pocket – in a fit of absence of mind, I believed. A week afterwards he handed me a Liverpool paper in which my lines appeared; my first introduction to print.

My Uncle Robert's method of criticism was less severe. At his request I sent my verses to him by post, and he corrected them with a care which I have since looked back upon with surprise. But I became so sensible of the value of his corrections, as well as of his hints upon verse-writing, that I collected his critical letters and kept them in a notebook. As a result of this training, I took second place in the competition for a Shakespeare Prize Ode in 1864, a little before my 18th birthday. There were three judges of the compositions, and I was informed afterwards that my Ode was voted the first place by Lord Lyttleton, one of the three. This fact was announced, and in consequence Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu not only said a good word on the subject in the *Dublin Evening Mail*, of which he was the Editor, but offered to publish my Ode in the *Dublin University Magazine*, which he also edited. Thus were laid the foundations of a friendship of many years' standing, and I was often invited to spend the evening with Le Fanu at Merrion Square. He told me once how a big Dublin business man had been on the point of making a large venture. One night he dreamt that when he went into his office he found a crow on his desk, resisting all attempts of his clerks to 'shoo' it away. The crow warned him to desist from his speculation and flew off. Next morning

he went to his office, and as he entered the room found his clerks, with great amusement, trying to chivvy away a crow that had flown in at the open window and perched upon his desk. The crow looked at him, very knowingly, turned round, and flew out of the window. So much impressed was the merchant by this realisation of his dream that, fortunately for him, he abandoned his speculation.

Another Dublin story for the truth of which he vouched was this. A jeweller was about to set a very valuable diamond, which he was holding with a pair of pincers, when, owing to a mishandling of it, the pincers slipped and the diamond was shot through the open window into the court below. Search was at once made for it, and carried on continuously, but to no avail. The owner of the diamond was naturally not only highly incensed but highly suspicious of the truth of the jeweller's story. Years went by; the jeweller, in consequence of this incident, which was a good deal talked about, lost custom, and died in poverty. But long afterwards the diamond was discovered deeply embedded in the whitewash of the wall opposite his shop.

Le Fanu led a strange life in those days. He had lost his wife, a beautiful and accomplished Miss Bennett, the daughter of an Irish Q.C., and had become a recluse. He spent his time between his office at the *Dublin Evening Mail* and his home in Merrion Square, never getting to bed till two or three in the morning or being up till midday. It has often been a source of surprise that the editor of Tory papers like the *Warder*

and *Dublin Evening Mail* should have written an Irish rebel poem like *Shamus O'Brien*. This explains it. His mother was the daughter of a Dr. Dobbyn, a great admirer of Lord Edward Fitzgerald and of the brothers Shears, who were executed in spite of their protestations of innocence at the time of the rebellion of '98. She told her son much of Lord Edward Fitzgerald and the fight he made for his life, and showed him the dagger with which he defended it. 'When I saw the dagger in the hand of Major Swann,' she told him, 'that dagger with which Lord Edward had striven in the last fatal struggle for life or death, I felt that it was not rightly his who held it. I knew the spot in the front drawing-room where it was laid; and one evening I seized it unobserved, thrust it into my bosom, and returned to the company, where I had to sit for an hour. As soon as we got home I rushed up to the room which my sister and I occupied, and plunged it among the feathers of my bed. When I left home twelve years later I took it with me, and it has been my companion in all the vicissitudes of my life.'

The outlaw Kirby, who was 'on his keeping' (hiding from the police) at the time of his family's residence in County Limerick, evidently suggested much of the devil-may-care character of 'Shamus O'Brien' to Le Fanu. With a price upon his head, owing to his connection with the Agrarian outrages, Kirby could not resist the temptation of going to a hunt or a coursing-match, at times narrowly escaping capture. An informer, learning that Kirby would be at his mother's

house one Sunday night, communicated the fact to Major Vokes of Limerick, the most active magistrate in the south of Ireland, who had more than once been baffled in his efforts to capture the outlaw.

Old Mrs. Kirby was in bed when the major and two constables drew up at the door, but, fortunately, her daughter Mary had gone to a wake in the neighbourhood and stayed out all night. Kirby, who was sitting by the fire, sprang to his feet and, seizing his pistols from the table, cried, 'At any rate I'll have the life of one of them before I'm taken!' 'Whisht! you fool,' said his mother. 'Here, be quick! Put on Mary's cap, take your pistols with you, jump into bed, turn your face to the wall, and lave the rest to me.' He was scarcely in bed when there was a loud knocking at the door, which his mother, having lit a rush, opened at once. In came Major Vokes and the constables. 'Where is your son?' said Vokes. 'Plaze God, he's far enough from ye. It's welcome ye are this night,' she said, 'and thanks to the Lord it wasn't yesterday ye came, for it's me an Mary there that strove to make him stop the night with us; but thank God he was afraid.' They searched the house, but did not like to disturb the young girl in bed, and, finding nothing, returned, sadly disappointed, to Limerick. The news of Kirby's escape soon spread through the country. Vokes was much chaffed; but Kirby never slept another night in his mother's house.

Meantime my father expected me to try for a University Scholarship in Classics. At my first attempt I failed to follow his good advice to divide my

day into careful periods for rest, work and recreation, thereby being able to go in for my examination in good bodily health. Instead of that, I had turned night into day by late reading after taking hard exercise in the football and cricket fields, and so failed. But I was wiser in my second attempt, for I kept early hours, avoided overwork, and won the scholarship.

My brother Jack had by now returned, somewhat affected by the climate from India, having contracted jungle fever at the unhealthy station of Pilibhit.

The following summer we went over to London, a large family party, to live in Half Moon Street. There my father introduced me to many of his literary, artistic and scientific friends – Dean Stanley, Sir Theodore and Lady Martin (Helen Faucit), and others. The weather was fine, my new friends were kind to me, and my eyes and ears were opened wide to the wonders of London.

I had already listened to good music in Ireland, for the College Choral Society had a deservedly fine reputation, and Dublin had become one of the homes of Italian Opera. I had taken part in ovations rendered to Tietjens, Trebelli, Sinico, Santley and Foli.

My father had fine musical taste, sang tenor agreeably, and was well acquainted with the theory of music. As a young man he accompanied himself on the guitar. My mother excelled upon the harp, and as a boy I listened with delight to her playing of Beethoven and Mendelssohn upon the piano. When she and my father went to Switzerland upon what they called their 'second honeymoon,' they stayed in the same hotel as

Mendelssohn. He was being lionised there, and to escape the infliction used to take long walks by himself in the mountains. Once, having lost his way, he overtook my father and asked him how best to get back to the hotel. My father informed him that he was going that way, and they carried on a conversation in English, as my father's German was not equal to Mendelssohn's command of our tongue. They got on well together, and my father was invited to go up for some music to Mendelssohn's private rooms at the hotel.

'I must get leave first,' replied my father.

'From whom?'

'My wife.'

'But won't Madame come along with you? I shall be highly honoured.'

As a result, they spent the first of a number of musical evenings with Mendelssohn, and on their return to Ireland corresponded with him. Shortly before the composer's death, my father and mother, together with Leopold and Clarissa von Ranke, visited Mendelssohn at Leipsig. It happened to be my mother's birthday, and he improvised in her honour. Within a couple of months he passed away after a sudden illness, only a few days before the birth of my brother Arnold, to whom my parents gave the second name of Felix in memory of their friend.

Jack brought back with him to Limerick his friend Thomas Gribble, like himself a member of the Indian Civil Service. While staying with us, Gribble went out with my brother to Mr. James C. Cooper's place, Cooper Hill, and there fell in love at first sight with

The Author's Mother
SELINA GRAVES, *née* CHEYNE

his daughter Grace, to whose elder sister, Janie, I had become attached. Gribble had to return to India very shortly, so little time could be lost if he were to carry Grace back with him. His suit was successful, the marriage was arranged, and my brother was to be best man.

Three of us, Jack, Arnold and myself, went off early one hot September morning to play a cricket match at Nenagh, County Limerick, against County Tipperary. The cricket field was surrounded by high trees, and the sun beat down upon us with great force. During the game Jack confessed to feeling queer, and a substitute was found for him. He made little of his indisposition, saying that it was only a touch of his old enemy, malaria, and Arnold and I went on fielding. But in the evening, when we reached our lodging, we found him in high fever. It was a question whether he should be allowed to travel back to Limerick, but a local doctor, who had been called in and did not regard the case as serious, thought that this was the best course to take, as he would be sure thereby of better nursing.

I remember well the trouble of that journey, my dear brother's flushed face and agonised movements, and our ever-increasing apprehension about him. However, when we got home he went upstairs two steps at a time and threw himself on his bed. Three days later he died.

It was a case of suppressed scarlet fever. Our little brother, Robert, had been taken by the same disease, and Jack had gone out to the cricket match with the

complaint upon him. Jack's death was a great blow to Gribble. But, as time pressed, the wedding, naturally a very quiet one, took place a few days after the funeral.

When my father was appointed Bishop of Limerick I was in my one-and-twentieth year.

The Episcopal Palace, last occupied by Bishop Griffin, was very much out of repair, but Westfield, the residence of Archdeacon Hare, was kindly put at my father's disposal. This was situated on the far side of the Shannon opposite to the cathedral, and we had to cross a toll-bridge to get home from the station.

Our neighbours were Major and Mrs. Vandeleur and their children, and the Hon. Robert and Mrs. O'Brien of the Inchiquin family, to which Smith O'Brien belonged.

After my father's installation he set to work to acquaint himself thoroughly with his diocese, which was a very large one, consisting of three divisions, Limerick, Ardfert, and Aghadoe. Fortunately Parknasilla lay within the diocese, and from there he worked the Ardfert and Aghadoe districts. The town of Limerick was the natural centre of the remainder of his diocese, and from it he radiated in every direction, chiefly on horseback. He was a good rider, and had as a boy been intended for the army. Not that the family regiment was a cavalry one; but in those days, and I believe the tradition holds, every young Irishman of position learnt to ride.

Bishop Griffin had lived to an advanced age, and had ceased to be active. There were therefore many remote parishes in the county which had been little

cared for; and to these my father directed his especial attnetion, with satisfactory and often amusing consequences.

A complainant sent him word that though the Sunday morning service at a particular church had been fixed for 11.30 a.m., the rector rarely turned up till after twelve. My father, accordingly, took horse, arrived at the church shortly after eleven, and made himself acquainted with the parishioners waiting to attend the service. And a long wait they had, for the dilatory rector did not turn up till a quarter-past twelve. When he did, he found to his great surprise that his cassock, surplice and hood were missing from the vestry. Anxiously he peeped into the church and was horrified to see his bishop wearing his robes and conducting the service in his place. The bishop had waited for him until after twelve, and was therefore reading the evening service. To his credit, the rector stayed for the end and faced the episcopal music afterwards.

Another clergyman, being in too great a hurry to get through the lessons, would read as much as he could in one breath. While forced to take another, he let his eyes run ahead, and resumed his reading aloud at the point they had reached when the second breath was ready. This habit earned him the nickname of 'The Diver.'

A rumour had reached my father that a very old clergyman in a distant parish gave the strangest discourses to his congregation. He therefore rode off to investigate. Everything was in decent order and the

service was well conducted by the old rector; but when he got into the pulpit he delivered a most bewildering sermon, for there appeared to be constant leakages in the sense. My father was completely nonplussed. He went into the vestry after the service and told the old rector that he had been greatly interested in his sermon and would be glad to be allowed to look at it. This sermon, it turned out, had been preached so often that, in common with others, its edges had become greatly frayed. Accordingly the rector had put a set of them together and sent them to be bound. The binder, for the sake of appearances, had cut away all the frayed portions with the result that the last word or half-word in each line was missing. The rector nearly knew his sermons by heart, but not quite, and whenever his memory failed him towards the close of a line, he ran on into the next with little regard for the grammatical construction.

As a younger man my father was once attending a church, the rector of which was a connection of his own. There was no organ, and when it came to the singing of the first hymn the rector whispered 'Will you lead the singing, Charles?' My father was greatly taken aback, because he had no idea what tune he was called upon to sing. What was he to do? There was no time for argument or enquiry, and the hymn books were without music. He must sing something; so he started off singing and invented a tune of his own as he went along. This, of course, was not the tune to which the choir were accustomed, and after a pause, they joined in singing theirs, which by no means fitted

in with his. However, he stood firm, and indeed had by now come to like his new tune. After a couple of verses, he succeeded in teaching it to the choir, and so the confusion ended.

I have for nearly twenty years carried in my memory the following English and Latin light verses by my father, and set them down here feeling that they are too good of their kind to be forgotten.

REBUS.

Integer æger erit; minuas numerosior exit;
Si caput abscindas, amnibus ecce latet!
Si caput et medium demas, movet horrida bella;
Si caput atque pedes, Pol! tibi nil superest.
Horrescat quisquis spectaverit ora Medusæ;
Se, caput hoc spectans, quisque videre putat.

CHARADES.

I

When British soldiers march along,
With head erect and bearing stately,
My first attracts an idle throng,
Who run beside and cheer it greatly.

Then rude men tread on neighbours' toes,
And struggling hard for better places,
Give, with *my next*, a bloody nose
Or round an eye leave gloomy traces.

The battle thickens; lookers-on
  Than combatants are not much safer,
Until, though borne by careful John,
  My whole is flattened to a wafer.

II

True to the trumpet call of Fame and Duty
  The soldier arms and hastens to depart;
Nor casts one look behind, though Love and
      Beauty
  Whisper *my first* in tones that thrill his heart.

The War is o'er; with wealth and honours laden,
  The hero seeks the well-remembered Hall;
He woos and wins its unreluctant maiden
  And bids *my second* o'er her blushes fall.

He takes her hand; a mist of rapture thickens
  Before her eyes. Such bliss succeeding pain
O'ertasks her strength and fainting Nature
      sickens,
  Until *my whole* is rudely snapped in twain.

III

Whoever occupies the Chair,
  At Civic feast, Duke, Earl or Mayor,
Fills to *my first* the sparkling glass
  And lets the bottle freely pass.

Then olives, grapes and plums and peaches
Alternate pleasantly with speeches;
Until *my second*, on each plate
Accumulating, proves 'tis late.

The lights burn dim and on the wall
In horrid shapes the shadows fall.
My whole, appealing to our noses,
The presence of old Nick discloses.

My father's gift for making and guessing puzzles was great. Ogham inscriptions had been more successfully deciphered by him than anyone else of his day and his friend, Sir Thomas Larcom, realising this, had got him to unriddle Irish Ciphers, which had baffled all his police experts. But my father and uncle John enjoyed putting their heads together over less serious forms of puzzledom than these.

Crosswords had not yet come back to this country from America, after having been dropped by our forefathers for a couple of centuries, but anagrams and charades and rebuses were very much the order of the day and my uncle John bore the palm as far as anagrams went. There could be no better testimony to his remarkable gifts in this direction than this, which I found in Augustus de Morgan's famous work *A Bundle of Paradoxes*. I discovered two anagrams on Newton's name, which are quite conclusive: The notion of gravitation was *not new*, but Newton *went on*.

Some wandering spirit, probably, whose business

it was to resent any liberty taken with Newton's name, put into the head of a friend of mine eighty-one anagrams on my own, some of which hit harder than any apple. This friend, whom I must not name, has since made the number up to about 800, of which I have seen some 650, two of them I have joined in the title-page to *A Budget of Paradoxes:*

Ut agendo surgamus, arguendo gustamus.
Ptochodokiarchus Anagramistes.

Which, being translated is: 'An anagramatising Poor-law Inspector,' and well describes my uncle John Thomas Graves. A few of my uncle's 800 anagrams on de Morgan may be quoted. Here is an inscription on some precious goods sent to the Paris Exhibition: 'Go turn us damage us.' Another, a despairing cry from a sinking ship to a steamer in the offing: 'tug us, drag us, amen.' My uncle went on making these anagrams till one fine Sunday, on the Brighton beach, he caught sight of an advertisement 'Seaside Hymn.' This at once resolved itself into 'Damn his eyes.' After that he thought it high time to give up making anagrams.

While, as I have shown, my father neglected no part of his diocese, his main activities were concentrated on Limerick. I lived to see many proofs of his uplifting influence. For on my return to it, years later, I found more carefully conducted and more thoughtful services in the parish churches and well-attended morning prayer in the cathedral instead of what used to be a sparse congregation. For by this time my father had drawn many young and earnest Irish clergy into his

diocese and he and my sisters had rallied round our organist, Dr. Rogers, a fine body of professional and amateur singers, which made Limerick Cathedral a centre of the best church music. Socially our Limerick days in the sixties were delightful ones. What with fishing and boating and archery and picnic parties and cricket matches by day and dances and concerts by night we young people had rare times. Nor can I honestly say that the expression 'Limerick lasses,' implying the beau-ideal of Irish beauty, was not justified in those days. For I remember counting at one Limerick ball a full score, any one of whom would have been the belle of a London ball-room. When my uncle Robert paid his first visit to Cooper Hill he told me he felt he ought to have been a Rembrandt to have done justice to the ten beautiful sisters to whom he was there introduced.

Amongst our visitors to the Palace were Dean and Lady Augusta Stanley. I well remember the Dean's earnest talk with my father, as he sat at breakfast, carefully peeling the hard-boiled egg, which he always asked for, of every particle of shell before cutting it up to eat.

A little before I had visited him at his Westminster Deanery, and had found him in an earnest talk with Max Müller on the science of religion. Lady Augusta had poured out our tea, and we were beginning to take it, when a little Gordon-Lennox grand nephew of hers, in full Highland dress, looked at us very seriously, and then said very reverently, 'For these and all His mercies God's holy name be praised!'

'There, Max,' the Dean exclaimed, 'That's worth all your science of religion!'

John and his son, Charlie Stanford, once came on a visit to us at Limerick, and on hearing that we were to have a charade party at the Palace, John went out to Tait's big drapery shop and said: 'I want a suit of clothes for a boy of three.' 'What size, sir?' asked the shopman. 'My size!' answered Stanford seriously, as he stood six foot four. 'Measure me for it,' which the astonished tailor proceeded to do. In this strange garb Stanford quarrelled with our chief police magistrate's wife, Mrs. Moore, who acted as a little girl, her long curls hanging down her back over her short frock and pinny.

For these charades and for an entertainment called the I.O.U. Indians – my first collaboration with Charles Stanford – the audience sat on the wide staircase of the Palace, while we actors played our parts below.

The I.O.U.'s were supposed to be a tribe of long-tailed cannibal Indians. An exciting episode containing songs of Stanford's to my words ended in a wedding ceremony. At this the marriage knot was made suitably secure by tying the tails of the bride and bridegroom together.

CHAPTER VII

LONDON AND THE PRE-RAPHAELITES

Life as a Home Office clerk and Private Secretary – A contributor to the *Spectator* and dramatic critic of the *Examiner* – Swinburne's strange reading of *Bothwell* – His interest in my Irish poems, just published – Sir Robert Anderson and John Boyle O'Reilly, a surprise – Introduction to the Pre-Raphaelites – Morris, Rossetti and Ford made by William Allingham – *The Dark Blue Magazine* – Writing for *Punch* – My marriage and life at Eastbourne Terrace.

I LEFT Trinity before completing my degree course, as a good opening had been found for me in the English Civil Service. My father had wanted me to try for the Indian Civil, but I preferred a job in England where I could combine literary with public work. I had been nominated to a clerkship in the House of Lords, and I went over to London to prepare for the examination with W. Baptiste Scoones, the famous Civil Service coach, afterwards the author of a delightful work on 'Great English Letter Writers.'

Owing to the loss of my brother, I was in extremely low spirits, and Scoones had some difficulty in inducing me to apply my mind to the work. There were two or three competitors, both older and better equipped than myself, and I failed. But shortly afterwards,

having received from Mr. Henry Austin Bruce (afterwards Lord Aberdare), then Home Secretary, a nomination to a clerkship in his office, I went in for a further examination, again coached by Scoones, and this time was successful. Mr. Bruce had married Caroline the daughter of Sir William Napier the historian, and was a friend of my uncle, Dr. Robert Perceval Graves, through whose influence, no doubt, I had obtained my nomination.

I confess that I found my duties at the Home Office extremely irksome. The junior foundation clerks had nothing but copying work to do; all initiatory work was left in the hands of our seniors, and we were even without a Registry department at the end of the 'sixties. Our office hours were short – from eleven a.m. to five p.m., with an interval for lunch. We ought to have fought against our unsatisfactory position, yet did not do so. Action in this direction was, however, taken by some of our successors, with the result that they were given more responsibility. One of the young rebels secured a foothold in the office from which he rose to the position of permanent Secretary to the Department. This was Sir Edward Troup, who married a daughter of my father's friend and mine, George Macdonald, the poet and novelist.

When I joined it, the Civil Service was full of men of literary taste who combined writing in some form or other with their official duties. Amongst these were Arthur O'Shaughnessy of the British Museum, Edmund Gosse of the House of Lords, Austin Dobson of the Board of Trade, and Tom Taylor of the

Local Government Board. I added to the number of these Civil Service writers by contributing to the *Spectator* and other papers, and by acting for about a year as dramatic critic to the *Examiner*.

In that capacity I visited at the house of Major Evans Bell.

Swinburne had just completed his play of *Bothwell*, and I was invited, amongst others, to hear him read it aloud in Mrs. Bell's drawing-room. The first act he read with great vigour and power. When he reached the second act he appeared to be suffering from neuralgia, for he covered one of his eyes with his hand. But when he came to the end of that act, he shut up the book. He made the excuse that he was feeling too ill to go on, and went home supported by one of his friends. It afterwards transpired that, feeling nervous about his reading, he had fortified himself with a single glass of gin, which had been gradually going to his head until it had finally got the better of him.

Swinburne had a very weak head, and could not stand nearly so much liquor as most of the friends with whom he associated could take with impunity. He was, therefore, wise to go and live at 'The Pines,' Putney, with Theodore Watts-Dunton, who induced him to give up spirits and to confine himself to a reasonable amount of beer.

During this part of his life he took a daily constitutional from 'The Pines' to the 'Rose and Crown' at Wimbledon, rested there for a while, and after drinking a single glass of beer over a newspaper in the hotel

parlour, walked back again to Putney. During these walks he took a great interest in little children, interrupting his strangely springy walk to admire and fondle them. My son Robert, when in his perambulator, shared in these attentions, and may have helped to inspire some of the poet's delightful lyrics on the loveliness and lovableness of early childhood.

Before he was six years old Swinburne had read many of Wordsworth's poems. At that age, he once told me, he was taken to the Lake Country where he met Wordsworth and was blessed by him, a ceremony so awe-inspiring that he burst into tears.

From the 'Rose and Crown' Swinburne often trespassed in the grounds of Margin House, occupied by Mr. Arthur Wills, a man of fine literary culture. Mr. Wills knew that Swinburne was in the habit of walking beside his lake and resting under one of the trees which fringe its further shore, yet he never spoke to his visitor, preferring to treat him as an interesting wild creature, whom he did not wish scared away by any conventionality on his part. But the tree under which Swinburne so often reposed has since been called by the poet's name.

Whilst Watts-Dunton undoubtedly did much to keep Swinburne alive and active until after his seventieth year, not a few of his old friends complained that his surveillance had become so strict that Swinburne was well-nigh inaccessible. I was myself a victim. I called at 'The Pines' with my cousin, T. W. Rolleston, to see Swinburne about some lines of his of a political character which had caused great offence

in Ireland, and which Rolleston felt sure he would modify after hearing our explanation. But we were both denied access to the bard on the ground of domestic affliction, the recent death of one of his aunts. It happened that I was in sufficiently close contact with the sister of the deceased to know that the excuse was not a sound one, but we had perforce to accept it and surrender our message to Watts-Dunton who himself took it through to Swinburne.

Before this I had found Swinburne most friendly to my own Irish work. He made me recite some of my Irish lyrics, and advised me when I was in difficulty about a line or two in my song, 'Trotting to the Fair.' In the years 1888–9 Charles, Arnold and I had written two volumes of satirical verse on the Home Rule Question, *The Blarney Ballads* and *The Green above the Red*. Being Government servants, Arnold and I were debarred from putting our names to any political writings, so Charles's name alone appeared as author, and it was to him that Swinburne addressed a letter, of which I give an extract, thanking for the copies we had sent him.

'The Pines,
Putney Hill, S.W.
July 29th, 1889.

Dear Sir,

I am very sincerely gratified and very truly obliged by the gift of your two delightful volumes. I had read and re-read them already so often as to have many passages by heart, but I was about to order fresh copies,

having given away two or three sets to different friends and relations, and left myself temporarily destitute. I really cannot say how much enjoyment I and all to whom I have introduced your ballads have derived from them. They are, in my poor opinion, at least equal if not superior to the very best things in the Anti-Jacobin (and therefore, of course, to the very best things in any other collection of the same kind); their mastery of metrical variety is as delightful as their splendid humour and spirit.'

I became a friend of Tom Taylor of *Punch*, through his connection with the Home Office, and I ventured to show him some of my lighter verse. He took a fancy to it, but told me that it was extremely hard for an outsider to get into *Punch*. Therefore he kept smuggling verse and prose of mine into the paper as if they had been his own contributions, handing over to me what he had been paid for them. When he had thus established my work, he told Shirley Brooks, the Editor, what he had done, with the result that I was put upon the outside staff of the paper, though not invited to the *Punch* table, to which my brother Charles later attained.

I used to toil to the top of a steep flight of stairs in Baker Street to make suggestions for illustration to Charles Keene, the great black-and-white artist of *Punch*. It was a strange figure that encountered me at the top of those stairs, sometimes with his bagpipes under his arm, for, as a good Scotsman, he was devoted to the national instrument; though it is doubtful

whether the other occupant of the house shared his enthusiasm. At other times I found him sweeping up the hearth or dusting the furniture. He was a long dark man with a serious face, over which a slow smile would break when he thought the joke I brought him worth illustrating.

Life in Government offices was much more free and easy in those days. Tom Taylor once invited a group of dramatists and dramatic critics to his Government office at Whitehall, to discuss the existing condition of the stage. Charles Reade and Dion Boucicault were amongst those who attended the meeting. Tom Taylor was strong on dramatic reform, and it was broadly hinted that Boucicault was pandering to a low public taste by writing and producing his 'Formosa.' Boucicault replied characteristically:

'You must humour the British public, it is useless to attempt to drive it; and if the B.P. wants pap, pap it shall have.' After this we got no further with dramatic reform in London.

At the end of a very dull year's work, I had the good fortune to be appointed private secretary to Mr. Henry Winterbotham, Parliamentary Secretary to our department. I owed this promotion to the good offices of Winterbotham's friend, Sir Samuel Ferguson, the Irish poet and antiquary, who later became one of my literary godfathers.

I do not think I made a good secretary to Mr. Winterbotham. Though I am now said to write a good hand, my fist was then a wretched one. I got into a bad scrape with my chief in connection with

some turnpike trusts which I had left out of a memor andum for their Parliamentary renewal. But I held my appointment for three years, at the end of which time Winterbotham, taken seriously ill, went off to Italy for a change, overworked himself there, and was carried off by a sudden brain seizure. I was not appointed private secretary to his successor, and therefore fell back from a salary of nearly £300 a year to less than half that amount. As I had just become engaged to Janie Cooper this was a very serious consideration, which my prospective father-in-law, Mr. Cooper, felt so strongly, that he tried to break off the engagement. But my good Uncle Robert came to the rescue and undertook to make up out of his own pocket – and he was a poor man – the difference in my income caused by my loss of the private secretaryship. My prospects had further improved by my being put down upon the list for election to a Government Inspectorship of Schools in England.

Meantime I had graduated at Dublin University, obtaining the place of first Senior Moderator in the ordinary course, having been debarred from completing my honours course by my appointment to the Home Office.

I had long known the Petrie collection of ancient Irish music, to the publication of which my father had contributed. It was full of hitherto unknown and beautiful airs which dwelt in my memory and to which I began almost unconsciously to provide words as the music suggested them; for the original Gaelic words had in most cases disappeared. A few of these

early lyrics were arranged to the old Irish airs by Joseph Robinson, an Irish composer of repute.

By this time I had begun to pick up Irish airs on my own account, airs to which the Kerry peasantry sang and danced. Amongst these was a Kerry version of the air called 'The Top of the Cork Road,' which, as Sir Charles Stanford afterwards declared, was much finer than the Cork original. I had often danced an Irish jig to this tune, and one morning found myself whistling it as I crossed the London parks to my work in the Home Office. As I whistled, recollections of Father Michael Walsh rose to my mind, so that when I reached Whitehall they had woven themselves into my song of 'Father O'Flynn.' I do not think I had to alter a word of it as I wrote it down at my office desk before I began my morning's work.

'Father O'Flynn' appeared shortly after in the *Spectator*, but did not see the light as a song to music until nearly ten years had passed.

I was now, however, more intent upon writing in a serious vein, and undertook the assistant editorship of the newly established monthly magazine, *The Dark Blue*. The editor and proprietor was Mr. John Christian Freund.

Relatives and friends of mine, among them Mr. Ruskin, contributed handsomely towards its publication, and our staff of writers was a strong one, including Swinburne, Rossetti, William Morris, W. S. Gilbert, Andrew Lang, Edward Dowden and G. F. Armstrong. *The Dark Blue* was burdened, however, by a weak novel, composed jointly by Freund and his mother; its

business side was mismanaged, and its brief life soon ended.

In the year '73 my first volume of poems, *Songs of Killarney*, was produced by Bradbury and Agnew, the publishers of *Punch*. It had a handsome reception from the press, especially from the *Spectator*. This notice, written by Richard Holt Hutton, the editor, brought about my personal acquaintance, I might even say friendship with him, and led to my being for many years a reviewer and verse writer for his journal. It also led indirectly to the employment of my brother Charles, first as a reviewer, then as sub-editor, and finally as assistant-editor of the *Spectator*.

Musurus Pasha, at that time Turkish Ambassador at St. James's, but a Greek scholar, had written a translation of Dante into modern Greek verse, and this Gladstone was asked to review for the *Spectator*. He at first intended to do so, but finally had to decline the task, and my brother Charles was asked to undertake it. Though a good classical scholar, he was not a student of modern Greek, but was interested in it through our brother Robert, to whom it had become necessary owing to his duties as a Government servant in the Near East. With Robert's assistance, therefore, Charles set to work on the study of modern Greek verse as well as of Italian, of which he was not a master, and at the end of six months wrote a review of Musurus Pasha's work which satisfied the editors of the *Spectator* and helped to establish him upon their staff.

Songs of Killarney had attracted American attention and, among others, brought me into touch with

John Boyle O'Reilly, editor of the *Boston Pilot*, to which journal I became a constant contributor in verse.

When I was in the Home Office, I had a room to myself opening into another which was occupied by Robert Anderson, Secret Service Secretary for Irish Affairs. As a clerk in the Chief Secretary's Office in Dublin, Anderson happened to be left in charge one evening in the spring of 1867 at a time when the Lord Lieutenant was out of Ireland, and the Chief Justice, who had on occasions of this kind to take his place, had not yet been sworn in. While he was seated at his desk a telegram came in to say that a body of Fenians were on their way to raid Chester Castle for arms. Knowing that not a moment was to be lost, he took upon himself to telegraph full instructions to the Constable of Chester Castle, thereby frustrating the attack. It did not transpire at the time how the Fenian attempt had been defeated, but Anderson got full credit for his prompt action and was transferred to London, where he came into closer touch with Fenian activities.

Anderson and I were good friends and amongst the founders of the New Club, ultimately converted into 'The Savile,' which moved from Savile Row into its present quarters in Piccadilly.

One morning I received a letter from John Boyle O'Reilly, in which he stated that on St. Patrick's Day he had draped the walls of the *Boston Pilot* with orange and green flags to show his belief that unless the North and South of Ireland joined forces as they

had done at the Inniskillen Conference, we should never have peace there. Anderson happened to come into my room at the time, and I read a passage out to him.

'And who is your correspondent?' he asked.

'Why, the editor of the *Boston Pilot*, John Boyle O'Reilly,' I replied.

'John Boyle O'Reilly!' he repeated very slowly. 'Are you quite sure?'

'Certainly.'

'Would you like to see his photograph?'

I stared at him and said that I would, upon which he went out and returned with a striking photograph of a young man in convict's dress.

'At the age of eighteen or nineteen,' he told me, 'John Boyle O'Reilly was convicted of having taken the Fenian oath, although a private in an Irish Regiment. For this he was sentenced to death, and would most certainly have been executed but for his youth. He was, however, transported for life to Australia.'

'If that be so,' I asked, 'how does he happen to be editing an Irish paper in Boston?'

'Well,' replied Anderson, 'we know that he escaped from imprisonment, but have not heard of him since. After what you have read to me from his letter, which proves that he has given up all ideas of physical force and is prepared to adopt constitutional measures in the relations between England and Ireland, you may tell him on the authority of this office that if he cares to revisit the old country to see his relations and friends, the Irish police will shut their eyes to his presence.'

I conveyed this message to O'Reilly. 'I shall never return to Ireland,' he replied, 'except as an absolutely free man.'

Years afterwards the question of a free pardon for John Boyle O'Reilly, who had done so much to promote friendly relations between England and Ireland, was raised in the House of Commons; but Vernon Harcourt, who was then Home Secretary, refused to entertain the idea because O'Reilly, by taking the Fenian oath, had broken his military allegiance to Queen Victoria, and therefore deserved no mercy.

Anderson ultimately became Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan police and won a knighthood.

When a young Oxonian, hearing that Sir Edmund Gosse was the last of the Pre-Raphaelites, interviewed him, on his Golden Wedding Day, he was snubbed by Sir Edmund for his ignorance. But time travels so fast, and with its waves obliterates past movements so rapidly, that I am tempted to say something of this group of artists and artist poets. They were dubbed Pre-Raphaelites, because, like Johann Friedrich Overbeck and his German associates, they had broken away from the conventional art traditions of the day, and taken for their inspirers and guides the Italian painters who flourished before Raphael's time.

My introducer to this circle was William Allingham, the Irish poet, assistant editor under Froude, and afterwards editor, of *Fraser's Magazine*. He was then a well-preserved man of middle age, and I agree with Nathaniel Hawthorne's description of his looks as

'intelligent, dark, pleasing, and not at all John Bullish.' His voice was musical, touched with the Donegal accent, but his pronunciation was finely correct, and he was a most fascinating talker who, if he did not 'set the table in a roar,' always started it thinking and smiling. This gift and their fellow-feeling as poets endeared him to Rossetti, who wrote him many letters, which Allingham preserved. His conversational powers were so recognized by Carlyle that for some years hardly a week passed without their taking a walk together. The substance of their talks has been recorded by Allingham amongst his prose writings.

One day Carlyle was describing an interview he had with Queen Victoria at the Deanery, Westminster. 'She came sliding into the room,' he said. 'As if on wheels!' interrupted Allingham. 'Not at all, Allingham;' Carlyle gruffly answered. But a few days later his friend overheard him describing the interview to Lecky, the historian. 'The Queen,' he said, 'came sliding into the room, as if on wheels.'

Rossetti was a dark, dreamy-eyed, fine featured man. His father was the Italian poet and patriot, Gabrielle Rossetti, who, after a troubled political career in his own country, married Frances Polidori, sister of Byron's Polidori. His mother, Rossetti's second wife, was an English lady. Matrimony seems to have sobered the elder Rossetti who settled down in London as Professor of Italian at King's College. Like his father, the son was a poet, but, unlike him, never took any interest in politics, nor did his brother William, the literary critic, or his sister Christina, a true Pre-

Raphaelite, like her brother Dante, but with all her soul set on the religious aspects of the movement. Her influence over Katharine Tynan's early poems is most noticeable.

I was an ardent admirer of Dante Rossetti's painting and poetry, for I recognized in him one of the greatest and certainly the most versatile leader of a new romantic movement in art and poetry, as distinctive if not as popular as that headed by Scott, Byron, Moore and Campbell at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As a private secretary in the Home Office, I once had to deal with a letter from him asking for leave to open the coffin of his beautiful dead wife, his 'Blessed Damosel,' within which he had buried the MSS. of his poems. In this letter he suggested that their publication would be a truer tribute to her memory than to leave them to perish in her grave.

The Home Secretary, then head of the Burials Board, granted permission, and Rossetti's now famous poems were recovered and published.

William Morris, poet and artist, who revolutionized English house decoration from floor to ceiling, always reminded me by his manly looks and massive pair of shoulders of a sea captain of the older kind. It seemed hard to believe that he had been a delicate, precocious child, and had, along with his friend and intimate Burne-Jones, when they were young undergraduates at Oxford, meditated joining the ministry of the Anglo-Catholic Church. Hearty and overflowing, he left behind him thousands upon thousands of lines of poetry of his own, chiefly suggested by the classics, and

freely translated the *Odyssey* and *Æneid* into spirited verse.

I was told by Watts-Dunton that he did not adopt Horace's severe standard of verse repression and compression, and poured forth as many as three hundred lines in a single day. He was an eager, incisive speaker, and exceedingly frank.

The poet Robert Buchanan had attacked Swinburne, Rossetti, Madox Brown, and others of their group in a *Contemporary Review* article entitled 'The Fleshly School.' Though the article was signed 'Thomas Maitland,' it had been rightly attributed to Buchanan by Swinburne and bitterly, not to say cruelly, answered in a pamphlet named 'Under the Microscope.' Swinburne's microscope was, in fact, a magnifying-glass, revealing Buchanan, from his point of view, as a loathsome insect preying on reputations above reproach. I was dining in the company of Morris, Rossetti, and others at the time. Swinburne was not present, but when the conversation turned on his reply to Buchanan's attack, Morris blurted out in his blunt sailor-like way: 'I think Swinburne might have let Buchanan alone, for after all we *are* a Fleshly School.'

Not long afterwards Buchanan published under another name a poem which might well have been dubbed 'fleshly.' It was entitled 'St. Abe and his Seven Wives,' and described Mormon life. Perhaps Buchanan wrote it to pull the legs of Swinburne and his friends, for I witnessed the consternation with which Thomas Purnell, one of the leading supporters of the Pre-Raphaelites in the critical world exclaimed:

'I cracked up "St. Abe" in the *Athenæum*, and now I hear it's by that confounded Buchanan.'

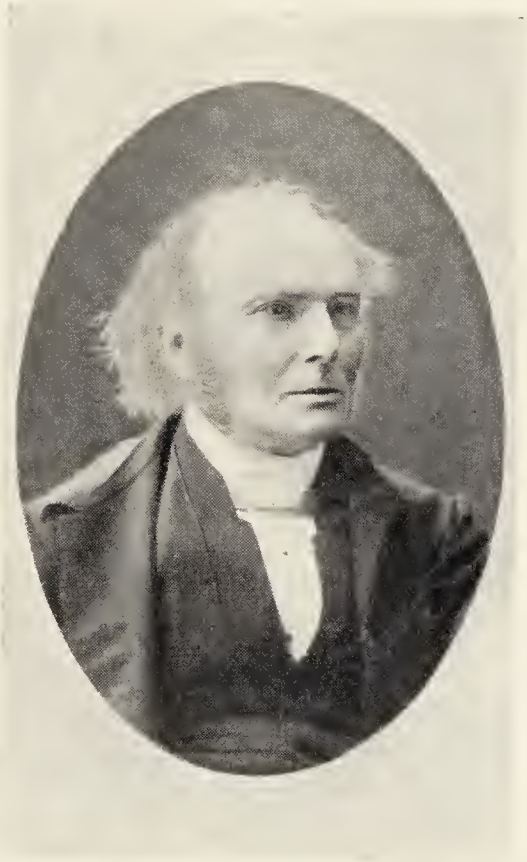
William Morris had become a warm Socialist in theory, and advanced that cause strongly upon the platform and with his purse, which had become a full one, owing to his success in the firm of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co., art decorators, in which Rossetti, Webb, Burne-Jones, and Madox Brown had shares. I heard him give a stirring address in the early 'eighties to a crowded meeting of fellow Socialists in the Hall of Art and Science, Adelphi, and, though I was not carried away by his arguments, could not but be impressed by his hearty eloquence. But Morris was not well treated by the left wing of the Social Democrats, and when he protested, after the Trafalgar Square riots, against their anarchic action, he was deposed from the management of the Socialists' organ, *The Commonweal*, the publisher of which was before long sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment for treason. Thus perished the Social Democratic League, for which Morris had written his fine 'Chants for Socialists,' and had delivered his masterly address at Manchester on 'Art, Wealth, and Riches.' It is a curious comment on his later change of views that he was offered the Poet Laureateship upon the death of Tennyson, an honour which he declined, as he had declined the position of Professor of Poetry at Oxford in 1877.

Ford Madox Brown, though as fair as Morris was dark, was not unlike him in type and was equally hardworking. He was honourable and upright, and is

justly described by his son-in-law, William M. Rossetti, as a man of warm affections, a steady and self-sacrificing friend. He felt interest in many questions outside the range of his art and, being a good and varied talker, had often something apposite and suggestive to say about them. I spent not a few *noctes ambrosianæ* in his house and that of his second wife, Emma Hill, who appears in many of his pictures. Here I met and liked his daughter Catherine, who married Dr. Franz Hueffer, the musical critic, and the father of Ford Madox Hueffer, the modern author who has written a biography of his grandfather.

The member of the family of whom I saw most was Oliver Madox Brown, artist and romance writer, who seemed to have a brilliant career before him, but was cut down in his twentieth year. But I met him more in company with my blind friend Philip Bourke Marston than in his own home. Philip admitted few to his private sitting-room in his father's house on Primrose Hill, and Oliver was his favourite, so I saw much of him on Sunday evenings and can keenly realize the loss our literature sustained in the quenching of his radiant individuality.

Ford Madox Brown was intensely interested in historical subjects, and though in his youth he was not a prize-winner in the competition for the House of Commons cartoons, his exhibits showed the promise fulfilled a generation later in the noble series of wall paintings which picture the history of Manchester from the time of the Roman Camp of Mancunium to the work of Dalton on the Atomic Theory.



DR. ROBERT PERCEVAL GRAVES
The friend of Wordsworth and Mrs. Hemans,
and author of *The Life of Sir William Rowan Hamilton*

Another house at which I received hospitality at the time was that of Sir Thomas and Lady Duffus Hardy. He was the keeper of the Public Records, and his wife and his daughter Iza were popular novelists and a charming pair of women. Here the Pre-Raphaelites gathered, and their younger followers came also, O'Shaughnessy and Davidson, Gosse and William de Morgan, Forbes-Robertson, the Hepworth Dixons, Du Maurier and Mrs. Lynn Linton.

At one such gathering we were shewn a thin fragment of Shelley's calcined heart, no doubt inherited from Trelawney; at another a lock of Milton's hair was produced, and judge of the consternation of the eager onlookers when a sudden draught, caused by the opening of a door, blew it out of its exhibitor's hand. We were all at once on our knees in search of it, and only breathed again when at last it was found.

Through my uncle Robert's generous assistance, I was able to marry Janie Cooper on December 29th, 1874. After our marriage we went into lodgings in Eastbourne Terrace, just beside Paddington station, and close to my uncle and aunt Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Block.

Janie and I had both known John Ruskin before our marriage, and I saw him again when he was living at Denmark Hill. We sat out in his garden enjoying saucers of Alpine strawberries and cream, and talking about poetry.

There was a dark tragedy, 'resembling a plot of one of the plays of Sophocles' as he put it, behind his affection for Rose La Touche, which was strongly

opposed by her father and mother. My father and I and others of his friends aided him so far as we could to overcome their objections, which were due to the nullity proceedings brought by his first wife, afterwards Mrs. Millais.

During the course of the negotiations Ruskin was taken seriously ill whilst staying at an hotel in Matlock Bath. I arrived there with some important papers, but he was too ill to see me. For a day or two his life hung upon a thread. On the Sunday that followed my arrival he was somewhat better, but a group of his friends who had mustered round him did not care to leave the hotel grounds for church service, and we walked up and down in conversation till we came to a large lily pond. A better account of Ruskin had just come out to us, and we were in such good humour that someone proposed a novel game of pool, the idea being to toss coins on to the lily leaves, the winner to be the one whose coin went furthest in safety. Coppers were most in use, but there was an occasional shilling or half-crown, and I had the recklessness to toss a sovereign. Luckily for me it landed safely beyond all the others. No one tried to go one better, and the question then was how to retrieve my winnings. Mrs. Walter Severn, a bright and mischievous spirit, suggested that we should hold on to one another, the tallest and longest-armed being in front.

This happened to be Mr. Newton, Director of the British Museum, afterwards Sir Charles Newton. He was in full Sunday rig, with top-hat, black coat and immaculate grey trousers. I held on to his coat-tails,

Walter Severn to mine, with the ladies in positions of lesser danger, hanging on to us and to one another, with Mrs. Walter Severn as rearguard. Rumour says that she let go out of fun. Next moment we were all in the lily pond except herself. Strangely enough, the gallant Newton had safely collared my sovereign, and ultimately the rest of the coin was fished out of the water. We presented a deplorable appearance, especially Mr. Newton, and a clever sketch of the incident drawn by Mrs. Walter Severn won the first smile from the convalescent Ruskin. But his marriage to Rose La Touche never took place. The breaking off of the understanding between them affected her reason, and she died soon after.

Our landlady in Eastbourne Terrace was Mrs. Phelan, an Irishwoman with two pretentious daughters. At first they were civil to us, but when they presumed upon our common nationality and wished to be treated as equals, and we showed that we could not consent to this, they turned round upon us. They had a general servant, Margaret Tarling, a clever and efficient young woman with all the best characteristics of the Cockney. She was sole house and parlour maid, her employer professing to be cook. But when we had occasion to find fault with any dish at dinner she would take it very much to heart, and we soon discovered that she was not only house and parlour maid, but cook also. One of the Miss Phelans told Janie that a former lodger, described as 'a young gentleman in the Guards' was expected to come and see their mother. During his visit Miss Phelan was heard to say: 'Get

down Ponsonby! Behave better Ponsonby!' Later Janie said 'I hope you had not any unpleasantness with that Captain Ponsonby Sheppard?'

'Oh no! Not at all, Mrs. Graves, it was only the dog. I don't believe I ever told you that his real name is Ponsonby Sheppard, after that gentleman, but we call him Biddy for common!'

One day a connection of my wife's, a good-looking young fellow, came to call. We were out, but he was shown into our sitting-room and waited till we came in. Miss Phelan had made the most of her opportunity, and coolly asked to be introduced to him next time he came; at which Janie remarked: 'I don't think he is likely to be here again, but the piano-tuner is calling to-morrow, and I will introduce you to him and then leave you together.' This was unforgivable.

Finding that we liked Margaret Tarling, the Phelans kept her in the kitchen and practically left us to do all the house-parlourmaid's work between us. I had to carry the water upstairs and empty the slops, and Janie had to make the beds, dust the rooms and lay the table. In the middle of this unpleasant situation, I was appointed one of H.M. Inspectors of Schools, and the additional £100, with travelling expenses amounting to about £50 a year more, seemed untold wealth to us.

I believe it had been the intention of Mrs. Phelan to drive us into giving notice by a domestic blockade; but this now became unnecessary and we had the satisfaction, after settling down in our new home, of getting Margaret Tarling to come to us as cook-general.

CHAPTER VIII

LIFE AS A SCHOOL INSPECTOR

We settle at Bowden – Richard Joynson's dream – An inspector's routine – Oldham and its 'Ruff-yeds' – Cheshire Schools – A visit to Man – Horace untranslated.

I CANNOT say, like my colleague, Mathew Arnold, that I became an inspector of schools to earn my bread-and-butter; though, as in his case, the prospects of a better income weighed considerably with me as a married man. But my new profession soon became dear to me, and remained so till the end, through the growing interest I began to take in the personalities of the men and women to whom the task of elementary education had been entrusted.

At the age of eight-and-twenty I was appointed one of H.M. Inspectors of Schools for Manchester under Mr. Kennedy, the famous Greek scholar.

What were my qualifications for such a post? Few and slender. I had taught some of my father's farm lads reading, writing and arithmetic of an evening. I had coached a couple of undergraduates at my University, and had taught a class of girls Latin for Mrs. Peter Taylor's London Institute. Luckily Mr. Kennedy put me for some three months under the

charge of the second inspector whom I was succeeding – Mr. Hugo Rice-Wiggin, a keen student of the theory of education, and a capable, well-tempered examiner. He fired me with his enthusiasm; and we grew to be personal friends.

My wife and I reached Manchester on May Day, 1875, witnessing with pleasure as we passed through it the ribboned procession of its great, well-groomed cart-horses. We settled at Bowden in North Cheshire where we found ourselves in a healthy, well-built suburb amidst charming Cheshire scenery, and above all amongst pleasant and intellectual neighbours. Of these may be mentioned Canon Gore, afterwards Archdeacon, a shrewd, scholarly man with a keen sense of humour; and Frank and William Crossley, brothers of my Trinity College friend, afterwards Professor Hastings Crossley. Frank was tall and fair, a fine artist and a literary student, but also such a sharp-witted engineer that on a railway journey abroad, whilst listening to the explanation of the mechanism of the Otto gas engine by its inventor, with whom he happened to be travelling, he had thought out an improvement upon it which ultimately produced the Crossley gas engine. William Crossley was small and dark; in no sense as brilliant as his brother, but just the practical business partner he wanted to make the family gas engine hum. He outlived Frank, entered Parliament, and was a baronet at his death.

Then there were George Hicks, a young Glasgow man responsible for the conception and carrying out of the Manchester Ship Canal; Frederick Binney, a

Spiritualist solicitor who afterwards ran a philanthropic colony in the United States, and John Stuart Bogg, a Swedenborgian, who, with Hicks and myself, founded the Dramatic Reform Society in Manchester.

When we removed from Sandiford House to Ashley Road, I became intimate with the Vicar of St. John's, Mr. Henry Wainwright, a famous Broad Church preacher, and took up the Superintendency of his Sunday School. Another good friend of ours was Alexander Ireland, owner of the *Manchester Examiner*, who had been the friend of Leigh Hunt. At his house I met Dr. Grosart, a Presbyterian divine and the editor of many early English classics, and his librarian, David Main, editor of the most scholarly edition of English sonnets of Victorian days. Mrs. Ireland was a fine musician, and one of their children is John Ireland, the composer.

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Our most intimate friends at Bowden were Mr. and Mrs. Richard Joynson. He was a prominent silk manufacturer in Manchester, and the manager of a large school attended by the children of his work-people, a right good man. He had a strange psychical experience in those days. He dreamt one night that he was in a neighbouring street at the corner of which he saw a poor woman with several little children huddled round her, all of them in the extremity of hunger. He went to sleep again, and dreamt the same dream. This time, on waking, he got out of bed, and was beginning to dress with the object of going to the

scene of his dream, when his wife woke up and dissuaded him from doing so, as it was raining in torrents. He dozed off to sleep again, but woke for the third time after dreaming the same dream. He sprang to the floor, dressed hurriedly, went out with his wife, and found the situation exactly as he had dreamt it. With great difficulty the good couple brought back the sufferers to their house, warmed, fed and clothed them, and afterwards saw them out of want. Richard and Susan Joynson have passed away. Their one child, Grace, married 'Jix' and is now Lady Brentford.

Satisfied that I was competent, Mr. Kennedy left me to my own devices. Bowdon was eight miles from Manchester, the centre of my work, and to get to it betimes I had to rise at seven o'clock. There I inspected, or rather examined, one school after another from nine till twelve. First the sub-inspector and I would hear the whole school read, calling them up one at a time from their arithmetic, transcription, or composition papers. When the work of the 'Three Rs' had been thus disposed of, we examined the school by show of hands in their class subjects.

The lower part of the school was then dismissed, and where higher subjects, known as specific subjects, were taken by the top classes, their scholars sat down to answer questions in them upon paper. After the papers had been collected and the school finally dismissed, I went over, with the pupil- or student-teachers in the schools, the papers that they had written before me on the last Saturday of the previous month. After this I took an hour's breathing-space,

during which I lunched, and then returned to a similar afternoon's work sometimes in a fresh school, sometimes in another department of the same one. Then I rushed off to catch a train in time to get home for tea at Bowden.

The examination of infant schools involved no paper work; but as it was usual to examine the infants as far as possible individually, and that meant standing all the time, the inspection of an infant school was no child's play. Sewing was one of the subjects of class examination, but I brought the specimens home in my bag, and my wife marked them for me.

Besides all this routine work of examination, we inspectors were responsible for the correctness of school registers, the due keeping of the school log-book, and the very elaborate returns made by the school managers – returns quite as distracting as those which British citizens have now to render in tax accounts.

Lastly, it was our duty to superintend examinations held in large centres at Christmas and Midsummer of candidates for the position of certified teacher, and of what were then known as Queen's Scholars, entrants into training colleges recognized by the Education Department. When the examinations were over, each inspector had to take his share in reporting upon the papers. The revision of these was the most tedious part of my work, although I was allowed to vary the subjects with which I had to deal. Having to look over some five hundred papers, say on geography, school management, French, or Latin, became so dull a business before one was half-way through them, in

what would otherwise have been holiday-time, that it took all one's concentration to do justice to the remainder.

The Manchester district ramified up to Rhodes, Gorton and Middleton, Eccles and Oldham. I had a pleasant stretch of Cheshire country as well, and as a really delightful holiday task, I had the inspection of over fifty schools in the Isle of Man during the months of June and July.

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The inspection of the Oldham schools was a difficulty, for the morning trains from Bowden to Manchester, and thence to Oldham, left me so little time to get from one Manchester station to another, that I had to run the mile that lay between them; a cab would have been held up by the dense Manchester traffic. This rush from station to station was the only exercise I got on weekdays at that time of the year.

Arrived at Oldham – a very rough place in those days, so much so that Manchester called its inhabitants 'Owdham Ruff-yeds' (rough-heads) – I had two lots of half-time lads and lasses to examine, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon, for the schools were only capable of holding half their pupils at a time. The two months and more that it took to inspect these Oldham schools were the most tedious in the year; yet they had their brighter moments.

I had been invited to lunch with the leading manufacturer, afterwards M.P. for Oldham. I did not go up to his beautiful house along with him, as I had

been detained in a school, but when I arrived at his lodge-gate the lodge-keeper, a fine old Lancashire woman, smoking a clay pipe, took charge of me, and poured forth the proud account of her family history. She was my host's mother, and had gone through a great deal in her early married life, but had 'seen the boy through and up' to his present high position.

'But,' I said to her, 'why are you not living up at the house with him?' She laughed and replied, 'I'm not accustomed to such grand ways, and like to have my cosy little home to myself at his gate. He is a good son, and is always coming down for a quiet cosset with me.'

My sub-inspector, Mr. Lovett, once taught night-school at Oldham amongst the 'Ruff-yeds.' To these night classes the young women operatives often came in low dresses, but their presence had not the effect of quelling the unruly elements among the opposite sex. Mr. Lovett soon found out that there had been a succession of night-school masters before him, and that in the attempt to maintain discipline each of them had been knocked out by one of the 'Ruff-yeds.' His own time came, but fortunately in the struggle that ensued between him and the school bully, a much more powerful man than himself, he employed a successful trip which brought his opponent down so heavily on the back of his head that he was completely put out of action, and Lovett was proclaimed the victor by the damsels in the low dresses. This wearing of low dresses was only part and parcel of the way in which the highly-paid mill-hands of those

days lived. I was told by Mr. Seddon, a leading Oldham schoolmaster whose brother afterwards became Prime Minister of New Zealand, that it was quite usual for a family of weavers, say father, mother, two sons and two daughters, to occupy a cottage for which they only paid twenty pounds a year rent, and yet between them to have an income of a thousand pounds. By Friday, however, they had all spent their week's wages, largely on luxuries: – rump steak or sirloin, spring chickens, ducks and green peas, early strawberries and salmon, and as a result their best clothes had to go into pawn from Friday night until pay-time on Saturday.

Mr. Seddon received five hundred a year as salary, and his wife as sewing-mistress got sixty pounds a year in addition. They had no children and lived in a four-roomed cottage; but, unlike the bulk of the Oldham people, they were extremely thrifty. Mr. Seddon was also long-headed. Out of his large savings he invested so profitably in house property that he grew rich, retired from schoolmastering, and became a Town Councillor, if not Mayor, of Oldham.

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In the county of Cheshire I met men and women teachers of a less sophisticated type than their city brothers and sisters. Few, no doubt, had been trained in colleges or possessed much scholarship. Yet I found them more sensible of the fact that the obtaining of high certificates for the position of a teacher should be the means, not the end, of self-improvement.

Perhaps they had not been too much tired out by study from the time of their pupil-teacherhood, and were more inclined therefore to continue their reading. They had, also, more leisure, and seldom had to do double duty as day and night-school teachers. They had, as a rule, smaller classes to teach, and more docile children to govern than the young toughs of the slums. They and their scholars had pleasant country roads to traverse, excellent play-grounds for school games compared with those of the city, gardens to cultivate, and streams and lakes to fish in. My heart warmed towards these country teachers, from whom I freely own that I learned more as an educationist than from the better-paid and more highly trained teachers in Manchester, with a few notable exceptions.

When the summer came round, I found myself at Worsley, where I had the advantage of inspecting Lord Ellesmere's group of Church schools, for which the Rector of Worsley, now the Marquess of Normanby, was school correspondent. Ideal schools they were, with the right type of master and mistress to teach and organise them. In particular I remember one girls' department being drilled by an ex-sergeant-major, a survivor of the famous Balaclava charge. A splendid set of girls they were, and went through their movements with wonderful freedom, and yet with precision. They were chiefly yeoman-farmers' daughters, straight, tall, well-limbed and fair-faced. No wonder that when they had their May Day festival, accompanied by dances and songs around the high,

be-ribboned Maypole, crowds from city and countryside went out to see them.

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The Rector, Lord Mulgrave, had inherited the title of Lord New Ross in Ireland, but it passed from his family after a keenly contested lawsuit. Yet he continued his interest in County Wexford, and lent me a volume which contained an account of a hurley (Irish hockey) match played between representatives of Forth and those of a neighbouring barony. This account was written in a West Saxon dialect of great interest, for it showed that English West Countrymen who had settled in Wexford had preserved the early forms of their speech long after it had passed away in their old country. The game was of the same type as those old English games of football played by adjoining parishes, in which practically the whole active population of each district took part. The goals would be, perhaps, the Market Cross in two neighbouring towns, towards which the ball might be kicked or struck by hand, or carried on horseback, or in any other conceivable way, the game often taking the greater part of a day. Such long-distance games used to be played a generation back, if they are not played still, along great stretches of sand on the north-east coast of Ireland.

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In June 1875 I paid my first visit to the Isle of Man. When my grandfather, Dr. Cheyne, died, my grandmother settled at Castletown with her

immense family of fourteen children. There my uncles went to school at King William's College, the scene of Dean Farrar's absurd school story, '*Eric.*' My mother and aunts were taught at an equally good school, of which the present Castletown High School is the successor.

When I reached the island, it was gratifying to find that there were still old residents who had been friends of my mother's people. Amongst them were Sir James Gell, Clerk of the Rolls, and the Rev. Hugh Gill, Vicar of Malew and afterwards Archdeacon of Man, whose father, vicar of the same parish, had married my parents in Kirk Malew.

General Loch was the Governor, and Mr. Jebb Vicar-General. The Jebbs were Irish. A near relative of the Vicar-General had been Bishop of Limerick, and another, Judge Jebb, had tried Scanlan, a Limerick squire found guilty of the murder of his mistress, an Irish peasant girl, and executed for his crime. The story of Scanlan and his victim was embodied in Gerald Griffin's novel, *The Collegians*, turned into a play by Dion Boucicault, under the title of *The Colleen Bawn*, and finally into the opera of *The Lily of Killarney* by Sir Julius Benedict.

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My elder sister, Helen, was married to Captain Powys, son of Horace Powys, the Bishop of Sodor and Man, who was a well-known humorist. He was not very happy in Man and seemed to find the island too small for his restless energies. He was once invited

to breakfast by Lord Derby, then Premier, and when sitting close to his host was asked by a fellow-guest: 'Have you read Lord Derby's translation of Homer?' 'Yes,' he replied, 'and enjoyed it – but I wish he would *translate Horace!*' The broad hint failed, for the Bishop never got beyond signing himself 'Horace Sodor and Man.'

He used to speak injudiciously of the island as his 'penal settlement,' and emphasised this by the following story. 'Illiam Kaneen died, and knocked at the gates of Heaven, asking for admission. "Who are you?" asked St. Peter. "Illiam Kaneen," he replied. "Where do you come from?" "The Isle of Man." "Never heard of it," said the saint. "Well, if I had an atlas," replied the Manxman, "I would show you where it was." "Oh, that's an easy matter to arrange for," and the atlas was produced. The Manxman pointed out his island home upon it. "Is it that desolate rock? Poor fellow! Come in, you've been in Purgatory long enough." ' No wonder the Bishop was not very popular in Ellan Vannin.

* * * *

I felt somewhat of an interloper when inspecting these fifty odd Manx schools. Here was an island blessed with Home Rule, and with a Board of Education of its own, and yet obliged by the Imperial Government to submit to the inspection of its schools by a representative of the English Education Department. It was not that there was no insular inspector, but as the Manx schools were supported by money

grants from England, the English authorities naturally required their efficiency to be proved by their own officer.

Man was in a more pleasantly primitive condition than it is at present. The Manx language was freely spoken, and Manx children at Cronk-y-Voddy school sang me folk-songs in the old tongue. I noticed that the children, though much shyer than their Irish kinsfolk in the Manchester schools, had much of their alertness of mind, and were, like them, particularly good at mental arithmetic.

I paid a second visit to the island in 1878, but before I had got through my inspections I had to leave suddenly owing to my wife's severe illness contracted on her too rapid journey from Manchester to Limerick.

But the Manxman whom above all others I should have liked to meet during those two visits to Man, T. E. Brown, the famous author of '*Fo'c's'le Yarns*,' whose centenary we have just celebrated, was teaching at Clifton College on both occasions.

CHAPTER IX

TENNYSON IN IRELAND

Tennyson at Kilkee – His face and voice – Sea and storm – His Irish experiences in 1848 – Admiration for Ossian – His unacknowledged debt to Joyce – A streak of piracy – Views on Spiritualism.

A GALE from the south west, after breaking suddenly over the iron-bound coast of Clare, and raging against it furiously for forty-eight hours, had just died away.

Scarcely a breath of air was stirring, and the August sky was intensely blue. Yet the great Atlantic billows, gathering out of the sea distance at ever increasing intervals, still boomed and smoked against the cliffs.

But the proverbial ill wind that had kept all but the most venturesome spirits close prisoners in the 'Lodges' of Kilkee had blown the storm-loving Tennyson over from Foynes, where he and his son Hallam were the guests of Lord and Lady Monteagle.

Tennyson loved the sea. Apart from the wonder of it that all our greater poets feel, he had Viking blood in his veins. So far back as 1842 he had written to Aubrey De Vere from Killarney: 'I have been to your Ballybunion caves, but could not get into the finest on account of the weather." In one of these, however, he composed these lines from *Merlin and Vivian:*

'So dark a forethought rolled about his brain,
As on a dull day in an ocean cave,
The blind wave feeling round his long sea-hall
In silence.'

Six years later he wrote: 'I hear that there are larger waves at Bude than on any other part of the British coast, and I must go thither and be alone with God.' But De Vere persuaded him to revisit Ireland, 'where the waves are far higher, and the cliffs often rise to eight hundred feet, and in one spot, Slieve League, to a thousand.'

Now, a generation afterwards, having found his full fame in the interval, Tennyson was paying his third and last visit to Ireland, and again returning to 'Kilkee by the great deeps.'

The intelligence of his arrival at Moore's Hotel had spread rapidly, and on this splendid forenoon a number of the Laureate's slim green volumes were in evidence on the terraces.

'These Limerick girls,' remarked a local wit, 'are growing more fickle than ever. Yesterday they had lawn tennis on; to-day they have Alfred Tennyson.'

Bathing had been out of the question for a couple of days, so it was with a keen sense of exhilaration that I again found myself on the Duggena spring-board. I plunged, and was in mid career, when, on rounding a reef corner, I all but knocked heads with another swimmer.

'Beg your pardon, sir!'

'Not at all sir!'– then 'What! *You* here, Alfred? Why, how long have you been in these parts?'

'About ten days, J.G.!' I replied, recognizing my friend Butcher.*

'Very odd we've not met before.'

'Not at all. I've been purposely avoiding you.'

'That doesn't sound very friendly.'

'Perhaps not, but my intention was particularly so. I heard you had Tennyson in tow, and knowing how shy he is of strangers, I thought the most friendly thing I could do was to steer clear of your party.'

'My dear fellow, I'll make that all right.'

He did within a few hours. That afternoon I got a note from him: 'The Bard hopes you will spend the evening with us. Don't bother about dressing. Come just as you are, if not exactly as you were when last we met.'

I was delighted at this chance of meeting Tennyson, who had visited my uncle Robert when in the Lake Country nearly thirty years before. My wife was still too much of an invalid to accompany me, so I went alone to Moore's Hotel, where the Bard received me beaming, evidently amused at what he had heard from Butcher of our marine meeting. He offered me a 'churchwarden' pipe, made me sit beside him, and plunged into pleasant talk.

His personality satisfied me, though Mrs. Cameron's and Rejlander's artistic photographs had led me to expect much. 'The large, dark eyes, generally dreamy but with an occasional gleam of imaginative alertness,' as his friend Aubrey De Vere has well described them, 'still varied between a haunting softness and an eager brightness.' 'The great shock of rough, dusky dark

*John George Butcher, now Lord Danesfort.

hair', that Carlyle wrote of in 1842 had been somewhat subdued by time. It revealed more of the poet's 'high-built brow,' but was as raven black as ever. Its hue remained unimpaired till the end, and when William Watson paid him a poetical tribute on his eightieth birthday, in which he referred to his 'wintry hair,' Tennyson kindly acknowledged the poem, but set Watson straight about the state of his poll.

Carlyle's portrait included 'a massive, aquiline and yet most delicate face.' Its contours still remained so, though now standing out in a healthy bronze. His movements and gestures were free and active, his voice full and musical.

I had looked forward to hearing the fine articulation and calculating hesitation in the choice of words which distinguishes so many English University men. He spoke instead with a rich Lincolnshire burr and a direct pungency which were as refreshing as they were unexpected. It was hard to believe that he was in his seventieth year.

He gave me a notable example of what might be called the serene power of the sea. Quoting St. Jude's words: 'Raging waves of the sea foaming out their own shame,' he told me he had once seen rolling in suddenly from the Atlantic over a still sea and under a still sky a succession of stupendous billows, which completely engulfed the shore, and whose awful serenity affected him far more deeply than any great storm had ever done. It is easy for me now to realise that he claimed a Norse ancestry, that he loved the sea for its own sake, and also because English heroism

has ever been conspicuous on shipboard; and that he glorified, therefore, in having made these lines in *Boadicea:*

'Fear not, isle of blowing woodland, isle of silvery parapets,
Thine the liberty, thine the glory, thine the deeds to be celebrated,
Thine the myriad-rolling ocean, light and shadow illimitable.'

and: –

'Roared as when the roaring breakers boom and blanch on the precipices.'

When talking thus of the storm to me, he rolled out a line from Homer, and challenged Butcher, a fine Greek scholar, to say where it came from.

Homer, he would say, is grander in our modern Northern pronounciation than in the soft Southern talk of the Greeks, with a difference as between the roar of the North Sea and the hissing of the Mediterranean.

The rugged, open-throated, deep-chested vocalisation of his own north-eastern folk, which he himself so finely illustrated by his chanting of verse, affords a similar contrast to the concerted singing of southern England.

Tennyson talked to me about his visits to Kerry in 1848, the year of revolutions, where he had an unexpected encounter with an anti-English conspirator who, regarding his appearance and dress as promising, closed upon him whispering, 'Be you from France?'

He had evidently taken a deep interest in Irish

character, and studied it with a view to literary expression; though he mistrusted his capacity to deal with the vernacular, and when he attempted to do so in his popular Irish poem, *To-morrow*, called in the aid of his Irish friends to revise the dialect. But in his talk with me he painted a vivid picture of his experiences in the South West of Ireland. He had driven to see a waterfall on Hungry Hill, where his jarvey (Irish car driver) had confided to him his close connection with the old families of the O'Sullivan Beare, or O'Sullivan of Beara, which he proved by producing an old family seal containing their quartered arms. Tennyson told me that he quite believed from this driver's features, those of a Celt of the Daniel O'Connell type, that 'if he had his rights he should be reigning in these parts.'

Their search for the waterfall was accompanied by such cataracts of rain that they had to take shelter in a roadside cottage occupied by a poor woman and her little son Johnny.

'The "King of Connaught" dried my stockings and went to sleep on a bench. The woman drew me up a stool to the turf fire with the courtly air of a queen. While he was asleep I heard the mother say to the boy "Johnny" several times – she didn't speak a word of English. The King awoke, and, as we were going out, I said "Johnny," and the little boy with a protuberant paunch (protuberant, I suppose, from eating potatoes) ran forward and I gave him a sixpence. The woman, with her black hair over her shoulders and her eyes streaming with tears,

passionately closed her hands over the boy's hand in which was the sixpence. When the "King" and I climbed into the car, I, in my stupid Saxon way, thinking it was the beggarly sixpence that had made the woman grateful, expressed my astonishment at such gratitude. "It was not the sixpence, your honour," he said, "it was the stranger's gift." '

The last paragraph comes from the poet's son, Lord Tennyson. As I remember the story, the bard asked the driver what the woman meant by 'The stranger's gift,' and got this answer: 'She was blessing God, your honour, that the child's hand had been crossed with silver by the dark-haired stranger,' a combination which was supposed to bring special luck. Besides, I am quite sure the driver could not have claimed to be the 'King of Connaught,' for no descendant of an O'Sullivan would have made such a boast.

Seeing my interest in his story, Tennyson said, 'There! You must make a poem out of "the stranger's gift," a compliment to what he himself called my 'Irish Doric.' Then he told me he was anxious to write a poem on some old-world Irish theme. Could I make a suggestion? I could not do so at the time, but he later wrote his *Voyage of Maeldune*, taken from Joyce's *Old Celtic Romances*, a copy of which I had sent him through his son. Of this poem his biographer says: 'By this story he intended to represent in his own original way the Celtic genius, and he wrote the poem with a genuine love of the peculiar exuberance of the Irish imagination.'

I had hoped he would have chosen an Ossianic subject, for the mention of Ossian had caused him to quote, rather to my surprise, Ossian's Address to the Sun, which he did with great feeling. 'Listen to this,' he said,

'"O thou that rollest above, round as the shield of my fathers! Whence are thy beams, O Sun! thy everlasting light? Thou comest forth in thy awful beauty; the stars hide themselves in the sky; the moon, cold and pale, sinks in the western wave; but thou thyself movest alone. Who can be a companion of thy course? The oaks of the mountains fall; the mountains themselves decay with years; the ocean shrinks and grows again; the moon herself is lost in heaven; but thou art forever the same, rejoicing in the brightness of thy course. When the world is dark with tempest, when thunder rolls and lightning flies, thou lookest in thy beauty from the clouds, and laughest at the storm. But to Ossian thou lookest in vain, for he beholds thy beams no more, whether thy yellow hair flows in the eastern clouds, or thou tremblest at the gates of the west. . . ." Is it not fine?' he asked. I owned that it was, but have never ceased to regret that the much finer, older and truer Ossianic gold, such as that which glitters in the pages of Standish O'Grady's *Silva Gadelica*, had not been known to him earlier. Had it been, he would surely have given us a saga immeasurably more true to the Celtic spirit than his *Voyage of Maeldune*, delightful though that poem is in itself. To compare Tennyson's finished poem with the Irish tale from which he took it, is a novel experience. I

share Mr. Stopford Brook's opinion as to which of them is the simpler and the more convincing.

No public acknowledgement was made at the time of Tennyson's obligation to Joyce. This would have sold an edition of my friend's book, and I attacked Alexander Macmillan about it when I found myself sitting next to him at a public dinner. Some compensation was eventually made by a footnote to *The Voyage of Maeldune* contained in Palgrave's *Selections from Tennyson's Poems*, which Macmillan published.

Perhaps a piratical tendency had descended to the bard from his sea-roving ancestors. He certainly took toll of other people's brains, as Shakespeare himself was bitterly accused of doing, when he was dubbed 'An upstart crow in borrowed plumes' by the irate Robert Greene. Thomas Woolner, the sculptor poet, once told Tennyson a striking story which so interested him that he begged him to put it down in black and white, as he would like to make a poem of it. Woolner consented, and sent him a summary of the story on a sheet of notepaper. To this Tennyson replied: 'No, that is not what I want. But you would greatly oblige me by writing out the story at full length, just as you told it me.' Woolner complied, taking great pains over the narration. Upon this Tennyson based his remarkable poem of *Alymer's Field*, some passages of which are a very close reproduction of Woolner's version. No doubt Woolner was in a sense complimented by this annexation, but he was surprised that no acknowledgment of it was made by his friend. Men of genius, I suppose, regard it as a compliment to other authors,

ancient or modern, that their literary gold should be thus re-minted.

Many instances have been given of Tennyson's absence of mind, but these two may be fresh. To avoid the invasion of his privacy by curious strangers, he had retired as soon as his means admitted it into fastnesses in Surrey and the Isle of Wight. Some American visitors once called upon him at Freshwater unannounced. The maid-servant innocently confessed that 'Mr. Tennyson was at home,' and ushered them into the drawing-room. Tennyson had barely time to bolt under the sofa, and left his wife to effect his early release. But the visitors proved extremely interesting both to the 'host' and his wife. Finally something was said by an American lady which he could not help challenging emphatically from his lair under the sofa.

A very shy young girl admirer was introduced to the bard at a garden-party, and was just beginning to make some way with him when his manner underwent a change. She timidly expressed a fear that she had offended him, and was horrified by the abrupt rejoinder: 'Your stays are creaking.' Off he went, and the poor girl was overwhelmed with confusion. She was on the point of slipping away home, when Tennyson suddenly reappeared smiling, and whispered, 'I am so sorry – it was my braces.'

When he was writing *The Gardener's Daughter* he had got into difficulties with the poem. One version after another of a certain passage had been rejected by him, till he was in despair. Someone made the suggestion that a set of his friends should ask him to

supper, at the end of which they should settle by vote which version of the perplexing passage was to be used. Tennyson agreed to the proposal, with the result that *The Gardener's Daughter* appears in its present form. My informant was Palgrave, one of my Chiefs on the Board of Education, who had the following from Tennyson's own lips.

On the appearance of his famous *Mort d'Arthur*, long afterwards incorporated in the *Idylls of the King*, it was criticized by Spedding as a clever but not brilliant Homeric echo, the reviewer adopting the apologetic attitude assumed by Tennyson in his verse introduction to the poem. Tennyson, who had proved himself so sensitive to criticism that he never forgave Coleridge for finding fault with his early metric, accepted his friend's mistaken verdict. 'Tennyson's mind,' in Palgrave's words, 'was at the time in flower with the Arthurian legend.' He later confessed to Palgrave that he most bitterly regretted that he had allowed this criticism to have a withering effect on his Arthurian intentions. Certainly there are few passages, if any, in *The Idylls of the King* which reach the same lofty dignity of thought to be found in the *Mort d'Arthur*.

During my evening with Tennyson at Kilkee, we talked also of Spiritualism. He owned to having taken a great interest in that question along with his brother Frederick. He could not account at all for some of the phenomena he had witnessed, but was still not satisfied that they were genuine. The mediums, in whose minds truth and falsehood seemed curiously

blended, were, he believed, the modern representatives of mediæval witches. He instanced the proceedings at an old-world witch trial, when violent noises corresponding to the spirit rappings of our times had occurred in full Court.

Our talk lastly turned on National Education, and he seemed eager for information from me, as a Government Inspector of Schools, about its enlightening effects upon the people. A generation before, he had himself said that one of the two great social problems impending was the housing and education of the poor man, and the other was the higher education of women. To this latter *The Princess* served as a pioneer.

I said good-night to Tennyson feeling that he was possessed of the rare faculty of getting the best out of others, while in return he gave them far more than he got from them.

CHAPTER X

BACK TO MANCHESTER

The Manchester School Board – A comparison of denominational schools – An Irish centenarian – A *territorial* Crusader – A ghost story – Jewish schools – Lancashire friends.

So far I have only dealt with my routine work as an inspector; but my eyes began now to take a wider view. I could not have had a better training district, for it contained a group of brand-new Board schools as well as voluntary schools of every denomination, and, as was to be expected in a city of such intellectual force, these were ably managed and, as a rule, extremely well taught, in spite of the procrustean character of the education code of the day.

The Manchester School Board was a capable fifteen. Its chairman was Mr. Herbert Birley, a brother of Mr. Hugh Birley, member for Manchester; he was a staunch churchman, and apart from his business-like conduct in the School Board Chair helped to keep the Church schools going, and paid out of his own capacious pockets, and perhaps his brother's too, for an organising inspector to look after the interests of thirty to forty Church schools. But he employed as cheap labour as he could get for the Church teachers, and they were constantly leaving his

schools for better-paid employment. This frequent change of staff had a disconcerting influence. As Mr. Seabrook, his inspector, put it, 'his work was like pouring water into a sieve,' for no sooner had he got the school ship-shape when a new headmaster or mistress, fresh from one of the training colleges, had to be taken in hand and shown the ropes.

There was a great desire on the part of the Board to erect schools worthy of the city. One of these cost as much as £24,000, but in this case a badly chosen site was mainly responsible for the resulting groans from ratepayers.

The Board schools were well staffed and equipped, but were too young to bear fair comparison with the two leading voluntary schools in the city, the Unitarian, and the Peter Street New Jerusalem school. Of the latter Mr. James Scotson was the head teacher, perhaps the most original yet strenuous head that I ever encountered. The results that he obtained in a single large schoolroom, in which the classes were only curtained off from one another, were extraordinary. He was never too old to learn, and was nearly fifty when Mr. Curwen came round with his tonic sol-fa method of teaching singing. Scotson sat down with his own top class to learn it, and was soon teaching it up and down the school.

I once wrote so long and eulogistic a report upon the school that exception was taken to it at the Board of Education; but I stuck to my guns, and the full report went through.

At this time I was engaged, along with my colleague

Mr. Rice-Wiggin, in preparing a book on *School Management*, designed to serve as a guide to the managers of Board and denominational elementary schools. This led to my observing very carefully the special methods of management in the various schools. They differed considerably. In the Church schools the management fell too often into the hands of the parson and of a business man who acted as treasurer. The vicar was often the sole manager; and unless he was not only a good educationalist but a good business man, which parsons too often are not, the school was bound to suffer.

The Nonconformist and factory schools were largely managed by the schoolmasters, who, under the result system, virtually 'farmed' the schools for their own advantage.

Undoubtedly the best voluntary school managers were the Roman Catholic priests. A group of priests would divide the duties of school management between them. One of them acted as the official correspondent, another collected the school pence and was treasurer, calling also on the parents to see that the children came regularly to school, and thus acting as the school attendance officer. A third helped the schoolmaster directly in the teaching. At a small Catholic school near Manchester reading and recitation were taught by a Monseignor of the Church of Rome with such astonishing results that the children of Protestant parents flocked to it in large numbers.

The parents of the children in the Roman Catholic schools were as a body so poor that it was necessary

for their Church to put forth all its efforts to keep them above water. And so the priests, who had no wives and families of their own to look after, threw themselves with the utmost energy into school work.

A notable instance of the thorough way in which they did this was furnished by an examination which I held on a Manchester Roman Catholic school conducted by the Christian Brothers. This school had gone on for years without asking for a Government grant at all, but the funds which maintained it fell short, and its managers asked for an examination under the Education Act and a grant to follow it. There had been no special preparation for the examination at all, and yet in all the subjects presented the scholars answered admirably well. There was no unreasonable rivalry between neighbouring Catholic schools, and after an inspection I would meet at dinner managers of several different schools.

I was asked to dine by Canon Sheehan of St. Chad's, Manchester, at whose table I found the Marquess of Ripon, a recent convert to Roman Catholicism, who had nominated me to the inspectorate when Vice-President of the Council of Education. We were talking together in a reception room before dinner when we heard a tremendous crash. The Canon made his excuses for leaving us, hurried out of the room, and returned crestfallen to announce that the kitchen chimney had fallen into the courtyard through which we had just passed, and that the soup, fish and other good things provided for us had all been ruined. Luckily some boiled mutton was salved, and upon

this and the best Irish potatoes we made our meal. A remark of mine as to the age of our host, who was a fine, upstanding, rosy-cheeked man, led him to say laughingly, 'You may put twenty-five years to that, Mr. Graves! And now would you be surprised to hear that my father is still living? He is a hundred, and only yesterday I got a letter from a friend telling me that he had ridden into Tipperary and refused help in dismounting.' But when next year I again sat at table after my inspection of his school, and expressed a hope that his splendid old father was still alive, he shook his head sadly and said, 'No, Mr. Graves, he came by his end last March. He had often asked leave from his landlord to cut down some trees on his farm and been refused. But when he reached his hundredth year, his landlord said, "Mr. Sheehan, I can refuse you no longer. Cut the trees down." He went out, delighted, to see it done, but in a perishing March wind, and was himself cut down.'

Another non-educational table talk at the Canon's table related to teetotalism. Beside me sat Father Lofty, whose school at Oldham I had examined a few months before. There he had entertained me royally, giving me the best champagne obtainable. When I deplored his not filling his own glass he shook his head, saying, 'Mr. Graves, I'm a Crusader,' which meant in Catholic parlance that he was a total abstainer. Judge of my surprise, therefore, when I found him doing his full share of champagne-drinking at St. Chad's. 'But I thought you were a Crusader!' I remarked. 'Yes, Mr. Graves, but a *territorial*

Crusader!' 'And what does that mean?' I asked. 'Well, at Oldham I drink no wine or spirits, but at Rome – I mean at St. Chad's – I do as the other Romans do.' Next year I examined his school at Oldham again, and this time he shared a bottle of champagne with me in his parlour. 'So you've ceased to be a territorial Crusader, Father Lofty,' said I. 'Not at all,' he replied, 'only my territory is somewhat more restricted.' 'How's that?' I asked. 'It's limited to the next room, in which I see my parishioners, and to their own houses. Yes, I'm still a *territorial* Crusader.'

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'Of course you've heard of the Chorley ghost?' Canon Toole enquired at a similar dinner-party. I replied that I had, but remembered only that it had been seen by a large number of people. 'That is true,' he replied, 'I was myself Catholic priest at Chorley, and broke down from over-work. My parishioners very kindly insisted upon my going abroad and paying for a three-months' holiday for me on the Continent. I took it gratefully, and my *locum* was instructed by the doctor to send me no correspondence but what was absolutely necessary, orders which he strictly obeyed.

'When I returned I met a little schoolgirl in the street, and, noticing that she looked very scared, I asked her, "Why, what's the matter with you, Biddy?" "Oh, Father, I've seen him!" "Seen whom?" "Terence O'Brien." "And why shouldn't you have seen him?" "Oh, don't you know, Father?"– at which she slipped away. On enquiry I found that poor Terence O'Brien

had walked over the side of the canal when the worse for liquor, and been drowned. Since then his wife and many others insisted that they had seen his spirit walking.

'Making up my mind that this was all a delusion, I called on the widow, and after condoling with her, said, "My poor woman, I hear that you believe you've seen Terence after his death. You must pray against these imaginations, for it seems to have upset other people too." "But Father," she answered, "I keep seeing him as plainly as I see you now. Only yesterday afternoon he came in and stood over there. The baby was crawling along to a saucer out of which the cat was drinking. He smiled down on the child, and as he did so he put his foot on the edge of the saucer and tilted it up from the cat, but not a drop of milk was spilt. Then he passed out." "Well, Mrs. O'Brien," I said, 'if he comes again, send him to me." I then got very busy over arrears of work, and a few nights afterwards went to bed dog-tired and fell fast asleep. Not long after I was awakened by a tap on the forehead. At once the notion came into my head that it was Terence O'Brien, but I kept my eyes resolutely closed until I felt quite sure of myself. Then I saw him, moving about the room at about the height of a man's head, a ball of blue fire. Backwards and forwards it went at the rate at which a man would pace up and down the room.'

Here the Canon stopped, and I did not press him as to what passed between him and the apparition. 'Two or three days afterwards,' he went on, 'I visited

Mrs. O'Brien again, and on asking her whether she had seen Terence since, she replied, "Yes," naming the very night and hour when I had been awakened. "And," she added, "I sent him to you as you told me to do." '

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Apart from Peter Street, and Lower Mosley Street schools, which stood at the top of my proficiency list, special mention should be made of the remarkable Jews' school, near Cheetham Hill. It was maintained by the great liberality of Jewish men of business, of whom one of the Montefiores was leader, a Spanish Jew of old lineage and distinguished appearance and manner. He told me that the 1,200 odd Jewish children who attended his school were drawn from most of the countries of Europe. Their fathers were either small, and often sweated, tailors or sellers of old clothes, or pawnbrokers and moneylenders of a low order. But Montefiore and his friends, believing in the capacity of their race and the uplifting value of education, built for the children of these outcasts a fine group of schools in separate departments for boys, girls, and infants, and these I examined from year to year with intense interest.

The difficulties which these poor children had to cope with were manifold, living as they did in cruelly over-crowded homes, and having, besides English, to learn Hebrew, in which their religious instruction was given. Their secular lessons were, of course, in English, which, owing to their separate European tongues, had to be taught with just that individual

care which now marks the instruction given in American schools, where children of a dozen or more nationalities assemble to salute the Stars and Stripes, their common bond of union.

The school passed increasingly good examinations in all subjects, but both boys and girls excelled in music and mathematics. I put a test in arithmetical problems to the girls, which I had given to one of the best Christian boys' schools a few days before, and they acquitted themselves quite as well as those boys, while the Jewish boys easily outstripped them. These Jewish children were very short-sighted, and a large proportion of them had to come out from behind their desks and stand round the blackboard before they could read the musical tests chalked there.

The Manchester school managers of my day were extremely hospitable. I was questioned on this subject by Mr. W. E. Forster, the author of the Education Act of 1870, when my wife and I were invited to stay with him at Birley-in-Wharfedale during a very sharp spell of wintry weather.

'I see no harm at all,' he said, 'in you inspectors accepting the hospitality of the school managers, provided you do it to establish friendly relations with them, and make no invidious distinctions between one class of manager and another. But I suppose you have to draw the line somewhere?'

'No, sir,' I said, 'I have drawn the line nowhere, even when asked to lunch by Moravian managers who regaled me last year on the thickest and hardest slabs

of cold junk, liberally soused in cold gravy.' 'Then you'll do!' said the Minister of Education, smiling.

We had a little difference, however, over the male inspection of sewing, Mr. Forster maintaining that any intelligent young inspector should be able to distinguish between good, bad and indifferent sewing and knitting. So far I agreed, but I suggested that it was unreasonable to expect me to give a practical demonstration in needlework.

Before leaving Manchester I was presented with a most friendly address of farewell by the large body of Lancashire teachers with whom I had worked. What specially touched me about this meeting was that even teachers to whom I had felt in conscience bound to give unsatisfactory reports upon their work joined in the testimonial and came to see it presented. One elderly master, who had walked an immense distance, came to greet me with a smile upon his face although I had inflicted the highest possible fine upon his school for inefficiency, namely, a deduction of three-tenths from the Government grant. I felt like the executioner with whom his victim insists upon shaking hands.

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I can look back with real pleasure upon my four years in Lancashire. Apart from my strenuous work as an inspector in Cottonopolis I had numerous other interests. I was a member of the Brazenose Club, and became friends there with Edwin Waugh, the Lancashire poet, author of the famous lyric 'Come whoam to the childher and me.' In the Brazenose Club I heard some stirring debates, and well remember Mr.

Pankhurst, the brilliant husband of a brilliant wife, haranguing us with great eloquence on some political subject. As he did so, he seemed to enjoy flashing a diamond ring in our faces from a gesticulatory but ill-kept forefinger.

Another literary rendezvous of mine was the Paradoxical Club. It was so called because each of us in turn had to come provided with a paradox and defend it. Amongst our members were two remarkable men, William Boyd Dawkins, the geologist and palæontologist, and Henry Hoyle Howorth, President of the Archæological Institute, a Member of Parliament, and author of a famous history of the Mongols.

My Uncle Robert paid Janie and myself a delightful visit at Bowden at this time. He was lecturing in Manchester just then on the question of the higher education of women, to which he had contributed so signally in Ireland as the organiser of the work of Alexandra College Dublin, and as its Professor of Latin; for he had returned to Ireland when my father became a Bishop and besides acting as his examining chaplain, had been appointed Sub-Dean of the Chapel Royal. He had also inaugurated, along with Edward Dowden and Sir Samuel Ferguson, a Dublin Shakespeare Reading Society, which benefited richly by his remarkable gifts as a reader of dramatic poetry.

When he visited us he was engaged upon his final work, a monumental biography of Sir William Rowan Hamilton, for which he was to receive an honorary degree from Dublin University.

CHAPTER XI

A SCHOOL INSPECTOR AT HUDDERSFIELD

What the West Riding District Comprised – Our lawn Tennis Club. Characteristics of the Yorkshire Teachers and Scholars – The Huddersfield Church Schools and how they were reorganized – Mr. Mundella's visit and what came of it – Collaboration with Charles Stanford over Irish Folk Music – Production of 'Father O' Flynn.'

In the year 1879 I became full inspector and took charge of the West Riding district of Yorkshire. This comprised the large manufacturing towns of Huddersfield and Halifax, a stretch of country that goes by the name of Saddleworth, abutting on Lancashire, and a wide tract of the West Riding with schools dotted over moor, hill and pasture land. The climate was a severe one in winter, there being little shelter to be gained from hedgerows such as I had been accustomed to in Cheshire. But there was much beauty in the West Riding scenery, and though Yorkshire folk are slower to make up their minds about strangers than Lancashire folk, when the corner in their favour is turned, nothing can exceed their hearty kindness and constant generosity.

I settled down with my wife and children at No. 20 Greenhead Lane, Huddersfield; a comfortable house with a garden in front, in a shady road opposite the vicarage. We soon found friends. The establishment of a lawn tennis club was being mooted at the time, but two cliques were contending as to who was to be the organising secretary. I had by now become a reasonably good tennis player, and my appointment solved the difficulty.

We laid down a number of courts, four of cinder on which we played right through the winter, and before I left Huddersfield I had the satisfaction of captaining a team which won most of its matches against the leading Yorkshire towns, though Sheffield 'came Yorkshire over us' by making us play upon the wooden floor of their Drill Hall.

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The Yorkshire children were almost bi-lingual. The youngsters talked broad dialect in the playground, yet answered in correct English in class. The man behind the counter, too, would vary his language according to his customers.

Yorkshire teachers, no doubt in part owing to the education gained at home from reading parents, struck me as highly intelligent, and their very isolation in thinly-peopled parts of the West Riding seemed to make them more resourceful than the run of town teachers. One man had constructed an excellent relief map of Yorkshire, with minature railway lines marked upon it, down which he sent little trains, stopping them at tiny turrets representing towns, tufted, it

might be, by bits of wool or linen, or tipped with steel, to show the staple manufacture of each town.

The Church schools of Huddersfield were severely handicapped. Their teaching staff was seldom adequate, and their standard was low. I therefore had to give them worse reports, and recommend smaller grants in aid than their better-staffed and better-taught rivals, the Board schools, received. The Church managers came to me and said, 'You should not judge us by the same standard as that by which you judge the Board schools. They rely upon the rates, we upon voluntary subscriptions that are hard to get in.' I replied that my instructions were to make no discrimination whatever between one class of school and another, but to report upon them exactly as I found them.

'What do you advise us to do then?' they enquired.

'Take a leaf out of the School Board book,' I answered. 'Group your schools together under an association and appoint a Church inspector to visit each of them periodically and advise the teachers how best to govern and instruct them; but do not make the mistake that Mr. Birley made in Manchester, and underpay your teachers as well as understaff your schools, as you are now doing.'

The managers conferred together, but shook their heads over my scheme. Next year matters went worse with them, and they came to me with the same complaints. Like the Sibyl, I returned the same answer.

'Do you mind,' they then said, 'joining us in a conference with Canon Gregory, the Secretary of the National Society?'

I replied that I should be delighted. At this meeting, Gregory said emphatically that I could not have given better advice, and as a result the Huddersfield and District Church School Association was formed. The Church schools eventually caught up the Board schools in efficiency, and therefore received largely increased grants in aid from the Treasury. By judiciously pooling their resources, they were able to throw help into the weaker and poorer schools which were on the point of extinction, so that not one of them went over to the Board. Within a few years the area of their operations was extended outside my district, and a second Church school inspector was appointed.

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As good luck would have it, Mr. Anthony J. Mundella, the newly appointed Vice-President of the Council of Education, afterwards responsible for the famous Mundella Code, was invited to open a large new Huddersfield Board school in Spring Grove, built according to the latest improvements in school architecture, with a fine central hall and many class-rooms. I knew he was coming, but had not been asked to meet him. Then suddenly a summons came to me from my chief, who was the guest of my friend Mrs. Huth, by far the ablest member of the Huddersfield School Board, coupled with an invitation from her to my wife and myself to meet Mr. Mundella at dinner. I got together and put in order all the particulars that might be asked for, and off we went.

On arrival Mundella said: 'Mr. Graves, I am in great trouble. The notes supplied me for my speech at the opening of your Spring-grove Board School have gone astray. I must have left them behind me in the railway carriage, and I must now throw myself on your mercy, for at this late hour I could not fairly ask the Clerk of the School Board to give me a fresh copy of the information supplied. Can you coach me up for my speech?'

I drew my memoranda from my pocket and handed them to him. He glanced them through and said:

'Yes, this is just what I wanted; and you give, I see, particulars of the Church as well as the Board schools, which it is only right I should have, but which Mr. Abbott, your School Board clerk, neglected to give me. I suppose,' he laughed, 'he is not too keen about them?'

Mundella made his speech at the opening of the school next day and referred very handsomely to the Church Schools. When leaving Huddersfield he sent for me again, and said:

'You saved the situation for me here, and I should like to save a situation for you elsewhere. I mean, would you like a better or more suitable district than this?'

I thanked him gratefully, but declined, saying I greatly liked my Huddersfield work; but might I remind him of his kind offer later on? To this he consented.

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'FATHER O'FLYNN'

About this time I received a message from my old friend and companion in boyhood, Charles Villiers Stanford, asking whether I would write or adapt words to old Irish folk tunes chiefly from the Petrie collection. I was able to send him about twenty lyrics already written by me to airs in this collection. He accepted all the others without demur, but took exception to the words of 'Father O'Flynn,' not because he did not like them, but because they were 'unsuitable for a serious collection.' I maintained, however, that this could not be characterised as a comic song, and he replied, 'All right, old chap, I'll throw it in with the rest.'

Stanford then had a serious difficulty with John Boosey, who was to bring out the songs, so serious that they were not on speaking terms. Boosey therefore wrote to me instead of to Stanford, as he ought to have done, asking for my advice as to what singers should be asked to deal with particular songs.

I answered to the best of my ability, and, still maintaining my opinion about 'Father O'Flynn,' urged Boosey to invite Santley to sing it. He accepted my other suggestions, but added, 'I don't think it would be at all wise to ask Santley to sing "Father O'Flynn," for he has lately become a Roman Catholic.'

To which I replied, 'All the more reason for asking him to sing it, for Santley does nothing by halves.'

Boosey did not take my advice. But when a group of our songs was placed before a set of London Ballad

Concert singers, including Santley, and they were humming over these with much interest, Santley suddenly started up with a copy of 'Father O'Flynn,' crying, 'Here's a new song for me, and if I don't get a double encore for it I shall be surprised!' He got a treble encore, and the song sailed off into success. An even greater folk-singer than Santley, and one who has done more than anyone to popularise my songs, was my good friend Harry Plunket Greene, whose 'Interpretation of Song' has revolutionised the art of singing in this country.

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I parted with the collection of fifty songs, which included 'Father O'Flynn,' for £80. Had I known what I know now of the rights of authors, I should never have dreamed of making such a poor bargain. The Irish Melodies, which were arranged by Stevenson to Moore's words, have always been known as 'Moore's Melodies.' As Moore came to Stevenson with airs and words already fitted, it seems right that he should get chief credit for the collection. Similarly I came to Stanford with a large group of Irish airs to which I had fitted words, and I also lent him my collections of Irish Folk music which still bear his blue pencil marks. His work consisted solely in finding suitable harmonies for them, yet by a modern custom with which I could never agree, the songs are always spoken of as his. In the case of 'Father O'Flynn' the position was aggravated. I discovered the air, wrote the words, and the song was only included by Stanford in *Songs of Old Ireland* under protest.

Stanford safeguarded his musical rights and was still making £60 a year from his royalties on 'Father O'Flynn' twenty years after its publication. What Boosey made during all those years must have run into thousands. The original £1 12s. 0d. was all I got for the song for thirty-five years. Latterly I have received a few pounds a year from gramophone and broadcasting fees, shared equally with Stanford and his heirs. I had not signed away these mechanical rights for the simple reason that they had not been foreseen at the time of the original contract. I still have hopes from the 'Talkies.'

About 1906 I met Mr. Arthur Boosey by chance at Barmouth Railway station.

'Well, Mr. Graves,' he said. 'When are you going to write us another "Father O'Flynn?"'

CHAPTER XII

FROM HUDDERSFIELD TO SOMERSET

We leave Huddersfield – Eothen Kinglake's brother – Long inspecting journeys – Farmers and Magistrates hamper School Attendance – I approach the Magistrates – A tale of Ll.G. – Some experiments in Education – Juliana Horatia Ewing – 'The Shrapnels' Hauntings – Janie's death.

THE winter and spring-time at Huddersfield proved too severe for Janie's health, and our removal to a southern district was strongly advised by Dr. Clarke, 'the varigatedest little gentleman' that our tall Irish cook had ever set eyes on. This description referred to the rapid succession of his brilliant neckties. 'To watch him come chirping up the stairs to cheer up the mistress did your heart good. It was for all the world like a little robin popping up the steps after the crumbs.'

Bethinking me of Mr. Mundella's promise, I wrote to remind him of it, and a few days afterwards he offered me by telegram the choice between three vacant school districts, of which the more attractive were West Somerset and St. Albans; and at Dr. Clarke's advice I decided to make my headquarters at Taunton.

This sudden up-rooting was a painful one, but the hopes of an improvement in Janie's health, speedily

to be justified, softened the pangs of parting. In the spring of 1882 we moved with our four young children, Philip, Mary, Richard and Perceval to our new home on Haines Hill, Taunton.

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Our front windows looked out on a pleasant railed-in garden, common to the occupants of the neighbouring houses. At the back we commanded a fine view of the old country town of Taunton, over which we could carry our eyes through its vale to the distant Quantocks. A near neighbour was Arthur Kinglake, the eccentric brother of the author of *Eothen*; he was a good scholar, and, like his brother the historian, had a fine taste for good prose. Richard Jeffries, whose bust he gave me, was a special favourite of his. Kinglake was very tall and lanky. He had contracted the habit of keeping his head bowed whilst he sat talking, now and again shooting out keen, questioning glances from under his bushy eyebrows. Being chairman of the local magistrates, he regarded himself, though separated from his wife, as the natural medium for the adjustment of matrimonial quarrels. This duty he undertook on a part of his own premises, over the entrance of which was painted: 'Court of Conciliation.' Suspecting he had little custom, Janie once called upon him disguised as a working-class Irishwoman, and poured out a tale of conjugal woe to him in her best imitation of the Limerick brogue. That evening he came in and told us all about it, being a little anxious over the recommendation he had made. Then Janie confessed. Real-

izing, however, that he would be a much more satisfactory reconciler if he and his wife could be brought together again, she effected this in our house.

Kinglake was of a curiously inquisitive disposition. One Sunday morning when he thought Janie was at church with me, he got into our back garden and, stick in hand, carefully counted our rows of cauliflowers and cabbages. That evening he dropped in after supper, and casually observed: 'I wonder, Mrs. Graves, how many cabbages and cauliflowers you have planted out in your garden?' 'You ought to be a far better judge, Mr. Kinglake, than I,' she laughed, 'for you have the latest information.' 'What do you mean, Mrs. Graves?' he asked. 'Only that I saw you this morning from my bedroom window counting them very carefully with your stick.'

But old Kinglake had strong points. He was a good friend to the poor, and a good Somerset man, and saw to the setting up in the Shire Hall of a series of busts of the county's most distinguished worthies. In this connection I spent a delightful hour with James Russell Lowell, then the U.S.A. Envoy in London, whom I persuaded to visit Taunton and give an address at the unveiling of Miss Thomas's bust of Fielding.

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My West Somerset district was a wide one. It contained only two towns of any size, Taunton and Bridgwater; and two lesser ones, Wellington and Williton. Between these larger centres there were scores of villages, most of them with their Board or

Church school. When the distance to and from school amounted to thirty miles or more, my masters of the Education Department required me to spend the night out, giving me an allowance of a guinea a day for hotel expenses. But, as a rule, I had not to spend this allowance, owing to the hospitality of the country squires and parsons, who would offer to put me up on receiving notice of my inspection. Even so journeys could be disagreeable.

I entered upon my duties in West Somerset during so long and heavy a downpour of rain that the railroad between Taunton and Bridgwater was badly flooded, and we had to travel dead slow along it with a great pilot engine in front. Both carriage doors were kept open to relieve the pressure of water, which streamed past us as we huddled on the seats. On the worst day we were attended by a steam launch, which skimmed alongside ready to take us aboard if the line gave way.

I had succeeded a fox-hunting inspector, who visited the schools in pink, looked at the registers, school accounts and log-book, chatted with the managers, and then rode off to the hunt, leaving his sub-inspector to do all the examination work alone. Another West Country colleague of mine was a famous rider, and Mundella was extremely proud of his having won the Blackmoor Vale Steeplechase. Anthony Trollope is credited with the power of combining business and hunting on the same forenoon, but his procedure was very different. He rode in pink on his Post Office inspections a good two or three hours before Mr. B. reached his schools, often seeing the offices opened, and

cantered off to the meet after two or three hours' solid work.

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I found an immense accumulation of inefficient schools, for the sub-inspector had barely had time to examine, let alone inspect; nor had he the authority to produce a better condition of things. The standard of work was pitiable, and the attendance well under seventy per cent., because the farmer members of the School Boards were breaking their own by-laws and employing their labourers' children when they should have been at school. Some even went so far as to prevent scholars from reaching the higher standards by charging their parents a prohibitory fee when they had passed the third. The magistrates were little better. If a zealous school attendance officer prosecuted a parent for a child's absence the parent either received a caution which he did not take, or was fined five shillings, which the non-attending boy earned for him the following week. The matter became a joke in the countryside, and the attendance officer went by the name of 'Old Foive-shillins-an-costs.'

These were the days of payment by results, and I was entitled to bring down with a run the easy Government grants for the schools recommended by my predecessor. I did not, however, think it fair to do this without warning, so I first called the managers together and told them that I should give their schools a year of grace, after which I should exact the same standard from them as I had secured from my West Riding country schools. As regards the attendance

question I undertook to tackle the School Boards, attendance committees and magistrates, and see justice done to them and the children. I acknowledged that the poor results were largely due to poor attendance, and that as the Government grant was founded upon the average attendance, their resources were crippled by the neglect of the Education Authorities.

But how, they asked, could they turn a poor school into a good one in so short a time? Even should I secure the better attendance of its scholars, few of the teachers were trained, and most of them had got into the rut that Mr. B. thought good enough for them. There were, I told them, a score of excellent schools in West Somerset, and as an example of what I thought good work, I would bring round to their teachers the papers done in arithmetic, dictation, English composition and other subjects by the scholars in these schools.

I did not wish to mortify their teachers, old or young, by sending them to school again, there to learn how best to teach the oral subjects; but I strongly advised them, if they hoped for anything approaching their previous Government grants, to see to it that their teachers put their pride in their pockets and visited schools at a distance where masters and mistresses, who are always ready to help one another so far as my experience goes, would give them every opportunity of forming the highest standard of oral and disciplinary work. I was ready myself to assist them in making such arrangements.

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The success of this scheme still depended on my

struggle with the Educational Authorities and magistrates on the attendance question, so it was important that I should get up my brief carefully. When it was complete I told the authorities straight out that the schools were suffering grievously from poor attendance, for which they were responsible, and which led to bad examination results and a consequent loss of Government grant. I had to add that where a Board seriously neglected its duties as an educational authority, and more especially when its own members employed children against their own by-laws, I should report them to the Education Office and, if necessary, ask for their dissolution, which would mean my re-appointing a new Board, as I once had to do.

In spite of the growlings of a few of the Taunton and Bridgwater reactionaries, one of whom described me as 'that Irish firebrand,' I persisted. I approached the magistrates in a letter addressed to their chairman, Colonel Allen, in which I apologised for what might seem to them interference with their magisterial discretion, but showed how their action had in some instances weakened the hands of the Education Authorities, and even brought their attendance officers into contempt. Knowing that they were in the main Churchmen, and opposed to the School Board system, I showed that the Church schools would inevitably have to give way if the attendance in them was not raised.

I met the magistrates in full conclave and though I found that many of the West Somerset gentry were opposed to the compulsory education of the people,

and not a few still unconvinced of the wisdom of any education of the labouring classes at all, yet the general body of the magistrates present had clearly not realised that they were actually destroying the Church schools they wished to save, by conniving at a reduction of the grant. They accepted my recommendations in full. The Taunton by-laws were modified to meet the exigencies of the farmer class, and were even adopted as a model by the Education Department. The average attendance in the schools of West Somerset immediately jumped from sixty-seven or sixty-eight to eighty-two per cent., and Mr. Mundella, who had been watching my experiments with interest, and had asked me to report upon their results, was good enough to hold them up as examples in his next Educational Budget speech in the House of Commons.

The establishment of the smaller School Boards had generally been brought about by the inefficient management of the Church schools. These had been transferred to the new authority, often with little improvement in their condition; and there was a constant tendency towards this state of things, for the Act of 1870, which should have provided larger and more representative school authorities, left derelict Church schools at the mercy of the very farmers who, by withholding voluntary contributions, had starved them to death. I therefore counselled the Church school managers, as I had counselled those of the West Riding, to combine and keep their schools going by means of a voluntary Church Board, subsidized by common subscription and organised by a school

inspector of their own. This system was adopted at a large meeting held at Bridgwater, and was the means of saving the parish Church schools there and later on of preserving many other West Somerset Church schools.

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I may here relate a true story of David Lloyd George as a schoolboy, told me by a Welsh curate who had been a pupil teacher in a Criccieth Church school. When the Diocesan Inspector was coming, David had impressed on his Nonconformist class-fellows that on being asked any question on Church dogma they should not answer, but might reply to questions on matters common to Church or Chapel. David was himself called upon to repeat the Creed, but refused to do so. The Inspector proceeded: 'Well, my boy, what sort of a relation is God to you and these other boys?' 'He is our Father.' 'Has He more power than your own father?' 'He has power over everything.' 'Why has He power over everything?' 'Because He made everything.' 'Everything. What exactly do you mean?' 'Oh, the earth and the air and the sea, and everything in them.' In this way the Inspector took him right through the articles of the Church belief, and at the end of it said laughingly, 'Well! You have gone through the Creed much better than if you had said it word for word.'

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Up to this time the country schoolmaster had to be more or less Jack-of-all-trades. For did he not play the organ in the church, and measure the farmers' lands,

and make their wills, and write their business letters, and often prescribe for them when the doctor was away on his holidays? My assistant, Mr. Lacey, certainly gave help of this kind when he was school-master at Stoke St. Gregory. An excellent fellow he was in every way, entirely reliable, as steady as a rock, and thoroughly kind-hearted. Although he had failed single-handed to cope with the West Somerset schools, he loyally supported me in their regeneration, and later on was appointed a first-class sub-inspector.

There were some men with unusual powers among the West Somerset schoolmasters. Edwin Lucas of Wiveliscombe Board School used common brown soap as a better medium for judging weights than iron or brass, and it was surprising how well his pupils would appraise weights of all kinds by simply balancing them in their hands. They were also taught to judge distance by the eye, whether in length, breadth or height, though of course through the preliminary use of measuring-poles or tapes. His scholars, therefore, were not to be taken in when I put my hat on the floor beside the wall and asked them to guess its height, a test which makes fools of nine people out of ten. Mr. Lucas's father had even taught his seventh standard to estimate correctly the cubic contents of timber in bulk. This power, by the way, was possessed in a remarkable degree by an Irishman named Flood, who made his fortune by it in Australia.

At this time elementary education was preparing the way for higher knowledge. Voluntary local experiments in the teaching of commercial and

technical subjects, such as book-keeping, drawing and cookery, had led to their incorporation in the Code. But before grants could be made for them in the elementary schools, the majority of the masters and mistresses had to earn certificates of competency to teach them. This movement I organised in West Somerset in conjunction with the heads of Art, Technical and Cookery schools; and the country teachers responded with spirit to the call. Evening and Saturday men's classes in woodwork and women's classes in cookery became popular; mixed classes in drawing were successfully carried on at suitable centres. and many teachers were thus able to introduce these subjects into their schools. Moreover, this brought about a closer association of the teachers, strengthening acquaintanceship into friendship or even more intimate relationships. I even got credit for being a match-maker, though an unintentional one.

One side of Somerset education kept me anxious. Although I had been supported in a movement for establishing a teachers' library in Taunton, and the Elementary masters and mistresses had thus been able to keep abreast of the times in educational thought and knowledge, we were practically without night or continuation schools. The Whisky Money came to our relief. A large sum accruing to the Government from the Excise was handed over to the County Councils for technical education. The Somerset County Council was not behindhand. It had at the head of it two men of clear and wise outlook; its chairman, Mr. A. G. Goodford, the son of a former

Provost of Eton, and Mr. Henry Hobhouse, the Liberal Unionist M.P.

A special committee was appointed, and upon this I was co-opted as an outside educationist.

The question of night-school instruction by men and women who have borne the heat and burden of the day teaching children has always been a difficult one, in town and country alike. But the difficulty was aggravated in districts where the young people had long distances to walk to a badly-lit school building, and where the parents were disinclined to allow maturing girls and boys to go out late together. The school teacher herself was often a young woman of only two or three and twenty, and not best qualified to control a set of rough young yokels of nearly her own age. This last objection, however, was met by giving a sufficient salary for day and night teaching to masters, who could not have afforded to take charge of small schools at the starvation wages paid till then. As a house and garden generally went with the position of country schoolmaster, a real inducement was thus offered to young teachers to marry and settle down in charge of schools which had suffered hitherto from being used as mere stepping stones by young mistresses wishing to qualify as fully certificated teachers.

The night-schools benefited greatly and sprang from a handful of struggling units into a crop of healthy hundreds. Then we arranged for lectures and demonstrations in agriculture and horticulture, not always to the satisfaction of the conservative farmers, one of whom remarked: 'I don't hold with none of them

University chaps comin' round with their bloomin' toy-shops of bottles an' glasses full of all soarts of messes. Give me the good old ways of ploughin' and plantin,' orchard keepin' and zider makin'. What I knaws I knaws, an' what I doan't knaw I doan't want to knaw!'

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Janie and I spent three very happy years together on Haines Hill. Her health had greatly improved, and we made many good friends. A great addition to her happiness was the friendship of Juliana Horatia Ewing. We had met her first at Bowdon in the 'seventies, but she had passed out of our sight to Malta, and we were rejoiced to see again her full, serious eyes, firm, fine mouth, and trim figure as she came out of Taunton St. Mary's Church one Sunday morning. Her husband had just returned from his solitary life in India, and had been posted at Taunton in charge of a unit of the A.P.D. She and Rex, as she called him, were devoted to one another. He was a Highland Scottish scholar and musician, with a nervous, emotional temperament; she was the English literary artist through and through, with a vein of humour that made her a most delightful companion.

Janie and she remained friends till her death, and very companionable they were, both being active housekeepers, and devoted to gardening. Mrs. Ewing would say of Janie that she possessed 'the lucky finger' for planting, as no flower she ever gave her failed to assert itself in our garden. For my part I had the advantage of Mrs. Ewing's literary, and her

husband's musical criticism, and the hearty encouragement of both over *Songs of Old Ireland*, which Charley Stanford and I were passing through the press at the time. Other literary friends at Taunton were Mrs. Prideaux, the wife of the writer of law books, and herself a poetess, and Miss Alford, a novelist.

Mrs. Prideaux entertained Conan Doyle while he was going over the ground which his hero Micah Clarke was to traverse, with that care he has always taken to know the country where he lays his romances. I remember his telling me that if, as I proposed to him, he ever wrote a novel on 'The Wild Geese,' the Irish who fled to the Continent after the famous siege of Limerick, he would have to read at least a hundred books on the history of the subject, and spend a couple of years following their footsteps in Ireland and abroad.

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One afternoon Miss Alford was walking down Taunton Crescent when she heard the sound of beautiful instrumental music, apparently coming from a house called 'The Shrapnels.' She stopped and made up her mind to call on its occupants, the Pinchards, old friends of hers, in the hope of hearing more of the music. It ceased as she reached the outside gate, and she was faced with the uncanny fact that the gate was locked and all the blinds drawn. The Pinchards had shut up the house and gone off on a summer holiday.

Mr. Pinchard was a solicitor, and when making investigations amongst old Taunton deeds ascertained that the house had belonged to his family generations

before. It was standing empty at the time, so he purchased it and went in with his wife and children. Though rumour spoke of it as haunted, it was roomy and in a good central position, a special advantage to a business man like himself; and he was the last person to be affected by such a report. 'The Shrapnels' stood almost opposite a Roman Catholic convent, at the entrance to a narrow passage dominated by a respectable old inn, 'The Four Alls,' whose signboard contained the figures of the Parson, the Farmer, the Soldier and the Sailor, who were supposed to keep our tight little island in complete security. Tradition declared that 'The Shrapnels' had been originally a monkish establishment, and that the new convent facing it had been built upon the foundations of an older building of the kind. This may have accounted for an attempt by the Roman Catholics to purchase 'The Shrapnels' to form part of the new convent, an attempt which Mr. Pinchard successfully resisted.

For several years nothing uncanny occurred, but when the hauntings of the Pinchard family once began, they were no hole-and-corner business, for in broad daylight loud nerve-racking knockings were heard all over the house. Pinchard at first believed that these were produced by practical jokers, and had the house closely watched by the police, but in vain. He himself, a lame little man, sat in a chair by his open study door and, when the violent rappings began outside it, sprang from his seat and hobbled down the passage in search of the cause, but always to no purpose. Then he formed the theory that his neighbours, the nuns, had

established some connection with his premises, and that he was listening to their attempts to haunt him out of his house by these violent detonations. Here again he found he was wrong.

But there was another side to these manifestations, vouched for by his wife, governess and children, which he was inclined to pooh-pooh. He himself only heard unaccountable noises, but Mrs. Pinchard and the governess together watched the figures of a monk and nun in mediæval vestments stand one on each side of the doorway facing them as they sat in the drawing-room one summer's evening. The boys saw a great shadowy dog crouching on the mat outside their bedroom door, and woke up in the night to see strange faces looking at them over their pillows. A china cup, it was declared, sailed across the drawing-room and settled undamaged at the other end of it, and closed doors opened and shut again of their own accord.

Mrs. Pinchard, when walking upstairs to wish her children good-night, saw a hand holding the banisters and moving on in front of her till she reached the bedroom landing, when it disappeared.

Once while the family were seated in the drawing-room, the children upon the floor in front of a winter fire, all in the best of spirits, there suddenly fell into their midst with a tremendous thud what looked in the dim light to be a great hairy goat. They sprang to their feet and stood rooted in terror, but the monster had vanished.

They had kept all these experiences to themselves

until they were visited by Mrs. Pinchard's clergyman brother, who saw a strange figure pass through his bedroom wall. His bed was an old-fashioned four-poster, enclosed by high curtains. These were next violently shaken at the top, while their lower folds remained quite still; then they were strongly agitated below while they remained unstirred above. Smith left 'The Shrapnels,' and rushed into print in the local press over his night's adventure, much to his brother-in-law's annoyance.

My colleague, Frederick W. H. Myers the poet, who was at the time one of the leaders of the Psychical Research movement, asked me what I knew about the Taunton hauntings and, when I gave him all the particulars I could, begged me to get Mr. Pinchard to write them down for him. But Pinchard refused point blank. 'I have had quite enough of the whole business,' he said. 'It made my wife's life miserable, and going over it again with her would be sure to upset her; besides, I should hate the publicity.'

When his wife's nerves no longer allowed of her remaining at 'The Shrapnels,' Pinchard continued to use his study, which contained his law library and other books. One afternoon as he stood reading in the middle of the room he was startled by a loud yell, and found himself being pelted by the books from his library shelves until the floor was covered with them. It was only then that he decided to quit the house himself.

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All was going well with us at Taunton when we

engaged a new nurse who was a germ-carrier, and our children were successively attacked by scarlet-fever just after we had moved into a new house at Kingston St. Mary.

Their mother, worn out by nursing them and near her fifth confinement, had suddenly to be moved into a cottage some fields away; and there our youngest daughter, Susan, was born under disastrous circumstances. As a consequence, a tendency to consumption that Janie had fought off at Taunton recurred. When she could be moved we were urged to give her a change of air at Dawlish in Devonshire. From there she went up to London to stay with her sister, Grace. She returned to me and the four elder children in Somerset, and then became rapidly worse.

She maintained to the last a bright fortitude, and when dying sent for her children one after the other, commended each one to Christ's keeping, and passed away a few minutes afterwards, on the morning of March 24th, 1886.

CHAPTER XIII

LATER DAYS AT TAUNTON

Standish O'Grady's school – Some Ilminster recollections – The canny landlord – Misplaced Puritanism – 'Skimmer riding' – The slanderer's tongue silenced by inflammation – Colonel Ferguson Davie's fishing stories – My children go to school – My second wife – County Cricket – Somerset v. Surrey.

DURING the month's leave which I took after the loss of my dear wife, I visited her people and my own at Limerick, and on my way back stayed a few days in Dublin with my second father, Dr. Robert Perceval Graves, and my good Aunt Helen.

There I met some of the leaders of the Irish Literary Renaissance, amongst whom were Standish O'Grady, the true father of the movement, Katharine Tynan, poet and novelist, John Butler Yeats the artist, a memorable conversationalist, and his son William Butler Yeats the poet, then still in his teens, but full of promise.

Katharine Tynan and W. B. Yeats were at the time more influenced by the Pre-Raphaelite school of English poets than by Tennyson and Browning. But from this influence they were being withdrawn by the Irish genius of Standish O'Grady, for his glowing hero-tales called them behind him into the field of Celtic Romance.

John Todhunter, one of the finest of our Irish poets, had also fallen under O'Grady's spell and turned from English to Irish themes.

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On my return to work, my sister-in-law, Ruth Cooper, kept house for me for a year.

For the next four years and more I was extremely fortunate in having Miss Ada North, a daughter of the famous Brighton clergyman, to look after us. In her I entertained an angel. She was a splendid disciplinarian, always wise and discriminating, and her patience was inexhaustible.

My inspections in these years often brought me to the Ilminster-Chard district where I met many interesting people. I was once the guest at Ilminster of a splendid parson who had the misfortune to have lost both legs below the knee, but had risen again to the active surface of life upon two cunningly constituted cork substitutes.

These artificial limbs were provided by a mechanical genius at Chard. He was a shoemaker of an inventive nature, who began to relieve human sufferings by making a new and very successful support for his sister, who was afflicted with a weak spine. Paget, the famous surgeon, got to know of this, and since he could not induce him to forsake his local last for the metropolis, sent patients down to him for treatment at Chard. One of these, whose measurements had been sent in advance, crept into the cobbler's consulting-room a complete cripple, and walked out of it in such comfort

that six weeks later he was able to climb to the top of Mount Vesuvius.

An even more remarkable cure was wrought by the Chard genius upon the Chinese giant Chang, who had so weak a back that he found it difficult to make the best use of his inches when on public view.

There was no vehicle large enough to carry him from the station to the cobbler's house except the local bus, from the open door of which his feet protruded. Tradition does not say how he found his way into the room where he was fitted with his support. But he walked back to the station as upright as a dart, amidst the cheers of the whole community.

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The landlord of the inn where I put up when inspecting round Ilminster was so popular a sportsman and good fellow that his customers were always about him like bees round a cask of honey, vieing with each other to stand him treat. He was reputed to have a wonderful head, but only drank the best of brown sherry which came from a great glass barrel at the back of his bar, and cost his customers a shilling a glass. Not that they ever tasted it themselves. It was a special brand reserved for his sole use. His doctor, he said, would not let him drink any other liquor, but he might take a dozen glasses a day of this without doing himself any harm. The years rolled by, the glass barrel was emptied and filled countless times, and its owner ultimately amassed enough money to add a fine wing to his hotel. This was not really

surprising. Although he charged a round bob for every glassful that came out of it, the barrel itself was never charged with anything but toast and water.

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Puritanism was still strong in parts of the country and its manifestations could be cruel. One of our woman inspectors was once visiting a school, accompanied by her dog. She left him tied up in the yard, and proceeded to the inspection. In the very middle of her work, with the school managers, teachers and children all round her, violent barking was heard in the yard, and in at the door rushed a large rat pursued by the inspector's terrier who had broken loose at sight of it. Boys yelled, girls screamed, and the teachers exploded with laughter, while the rat ran in and out of the desks, round and round the room, and then out again through the open door, with the terrier at his heels. All discipline was thrown to the winds, and the inspector herself headed the rat-hunt into the yard, where a successful kill soon followed. Then the terrier was tied up again, this time more securely, and the inspection was resumed.

The school managers adopted a very different view of these proceedings from that taken by the teachers and children. They launched a grave protest against the woman inspector's action in the whole affair; first for bringing a rat-hunting dog upon the premises, then for not tying it up securely, and lastly for aiding and abetting that dog by herself conducting a rat-hunt along with the whole school, thereby ruining the

order and discipline that she had been sent down by the Board of Education to enforce.

The poor lady was finally reported to the President of the Council, the Marquess of Londonderry, into whose presence she went shivering.

'This is a very unfortunate occurrence, young lady,' he began gravely, 'but I confess I rather sympathise with you, for I myself kept terriers when I was at Oxford, and had rare sport rat-hunting. Now, I wonder if a great number of rats were turned out from under a haystack, how many of them that dog of yours would account for in a minute, for of course he hadn't fair play with that rat in this school affair. You can't be sure? Never had the chance of trying him? Well, never mind, but be careful not to take your dog again to schools where there are managers of that sort. Good afternoon.'

The Marquess was not only a solid man of business, but a student of literature. He once surprised me, as I sat next to him at a St. Patrick's Day dinner, by making a fine quotation with which I was not familiar. 'Where does that come from?' he asked me. I shook my head in ignorance. 'Why, from Thomas Davis whose works you, of all men, ought to know!' and he then gave me the complete context. 'You would hardly believe it,' he went on, 'but in spite of my present North of Ireland views, I was once upon a time an ardent Young Irelander and knew many of Thomas Davis's poems by heart.'

* * * *

Bigotry took worse forms on occasion; at the Bridgwater end of my Somerset district a handsome young C.E. couple, Mr. and Mrs. G., applied for two vacant posts at a certain Board school. Their testimonials were so superior to those of other candidates that, in spite of the opposition of the vice-chairman, an inveterate Anti-Churchman, they were appointed. Nothing could be said against their ability as teachers, for the school stood an excellent examination, and they were popular both with the scholars and their parents. After school, in the evenings, Mrs. G. taught a farmer's children as private pupils, and when going to and fro had to pass a public-house at an uncomfortable corner, generally occupied by the village ne'er-do-wells. These fellows were in the habit of chaffing and trying to make free with young women who came their way. Knowing this, the farmer always sent his eldest son, a strapping young fellow, to escort her past the danger point. The vice-chairman of the Board now proceeded to circulate a rumour that the farmer's son was 'carrying on' with Mrs. G. Indeed, he so succeeded in arousing the suspicious consciences of his Nonconformist friends that Mr. and Mrs. G. were cruelly 'skimmer-ridden,' she as an immoral woman, he as a cuckold. To be 'skimmer-ridden' meant having one's house surrounded by a noisy rabble of loafers and corner boys and girls with others who should know better, jeering vilely at the top of their voices to a noisy accompaniment of pans, pots, and kettles. This treatment the poor G.'s were undergoing, and the vice-chairman began to move his

Board to give them notice, alleging that their position as schoolmaster and schoolmistress was becoming impossible. When this state of affairs came to my ears, I took action at once.

I wrote both to the School Board and to the leading Bridgwater paper in which an account of this 'skimmer-riding' had appeared, saying that unless due protection was given to Mr. and Mrs. G. until the charges against them had been either openly repudiated by the School Board or by a properly constituted inquiry, I should report the matter to the Board of Education and suggest the holding of a Government investigation into the whole affair, at which I made no doubt the National Union of Teachers would ask to be represented. But public opinion had already been coming round to the side of the G.'s through the belief that a judgment had overtaken the vice-chairman for his false insinuations, since he had been visited with so violent an inflammation of his tongue that he had been obliged to keep that unruly member absolutely quiet for days, a new experience for him. With their vice-chairman *hors de combat*, the Board met and passed a unanimous vote of sympathy for, and confidence in, Mr. and Mrs. G. The 'skimmer-riders' sneaked off with their tails between their legs, and the monstrous bubble was pricked.

Narrow-mindedness was not confined to Nonconformist managers. A young school-mistress, who taught a small school on the borders of Devon, was given notice to quit by her board, predominantly Churchmen, because without their consent she had played the

school harmonium at a Nonconformist revival meeting.

When I visited the school for inspection I found the poor girl in tears.

I was staying at the time with my friend, Colonel Ferguson Davie, of Crediton, a former M.P. and a fine fisherman. The colonel was the leading magistrate in the neighbourhood, as well as a canny Scot, well acquainted with the law. At first neither of us saw how to help the poor girl to her rights, but then it occurred to me to ask the Clerk of the Board to let me see his books for the last six months.

It appeared that though the regulations of my Department only allowed the Board five representatives, they had, several weeks before they gave their mistress notice, calmly co-opted a sixth member upon the Board – of course a Churchman – and had thus entirely invalidated all their subsequent proceedings, including the minute by which they dismissed their teacher. This I pointed out at a meeting of the *bona fide* members of the Board, the sixth having been requested to withdraw, and informed them that if they continued to employ their mistress, against whom they had no just cause for dismissal, I, for my part, would not report them to the Council of Education for the irregularity of which they had been guilty, and which had left them open for replacement by a new Board nominated by myself. Under the circumstances, they agreed to continue the services of their excellent little mistress, for she was an uncommonly good teacher, and ceased to persecute her.

* * * *

Ferguson Davie had some remarkable fishing stories which he related with becoming gravity.

A friend of his, who was a supremely fine artist with the rod, made him a bet that he would catch a trout in the course of half an hour with a peeled willow rod, a crooked pin, and a line which was neither of thread, hair, or silk, or any other accepted material. 'Done!' said the colonel. Upon this his friend drew a long tough piece of field-spider's web from a neighbouring bush, fastened it to his rod and crooked pin, attached a small black-headed worm to the latter, and then dropped the bait softly into a freshet of the stream beneath, whisking out a small trout a moment or two later.

I recall two other stories told by the colonel. 'Once, when fishing from behind a bank of great river reeds,' he told me, 'my line suddenly went whizz! and the rod was dragged from my hands and out of sight. I had hooked a large male swan by one of his wings. Off he went across the stream, dragging my broken and disjointed rod after him, and so ended my day's fishing.'

'At another time I was fishing in a wide, deep pool at the foot of a fine fall when I hooked a good trout with my tail-fly, and was proceeding to play it when my dropper also became engaged, this time much more heavily. Knowing that in cases of this kind it is always better to let the two fish play one another, I waited till both seemed tired out, and drawing them carefully to shore, got my landing-net well under and lifted them to the bank. To my astonishment I found

my drop fly had caught a hare of seven pounds' weight, which had been swimming with only his nose above water when I struck and held him by it.'

* * * *

The years went by; my school activities continued, and to these I had added a course of Oxford University Extension lectures on Shakespeare, a Bible class and a drum and fife band at West Hay for older boys, reading the lessons in Church, and singing in the choir. My children, too, were becoming the best of companions. They were sometimes unintentionally amusing.

'Philip!' said Mary, 'if you go on telling such stories and stealing so many lumps of sugar, do you know what will happen to you?'

'No, what?' said Philip, rather over-awed by her earnestness.

'You will go to Hell, and have to say your prayers and hymns to the Devil!'

Richard and Perceval, after instruction from Miss North and the village schoolmaster, Mr. Bunston, went on to Mr. Sharpe's school at Lyme Regis; a school, we afterwards discovered, intended only for the sons of parsons. But Sharpe had got it into his head that every Inspector of Schools was a parson, as they used to be at an earlier period. I was very grateful for his misconception, as my boys did well at his school, and Richard won a scholarship at Haileybury, as Philip had done three years earlier.

* * * *

One Sunday I entertained to lunch a Mr. Firminger, who was doing duty for the vicar. We were strolling round the gardens afterwards when I noticed that the thatch under the chimney of our house was on fire. It was March, and there was snow on the thatch. We thought that if we climbed a ladder we could put out the fire with the snow, but soon found our mistake, for the fire began to blaze up violently.

What was to be done? People were assembling in the churchyard for the afternoon service but Mr. Firminger said: 'We must put out this fire, service or no service!' So I rushed to the Post Office, telegraphed for the fire engine, and Mr. Firminger and I then went into the churchyard and called for the congregation to volunteer for a service of another kind. Fortunately there were amongst them a couple of thatchers, who knew exactly what to do.

Meanwhile Colonel Napier, a famous cavalry officer of the great Napier stock, and a born organiser, had taken charge of a battalion of bucket carriers. We had a good water supply, and the service of buckets was conducted so methodically and rapidly that in about half an hour, under the direction of the thatchers, the fire was got under. When it was out, the fire-engine arrived.

I was a widower for nearly six years; but towards the end of my time at Taunton I was introduced by my cousin, General Friedhelm von Ranke, to Amy, the eldest daughter of Professor Heinrich von Ranke of Munich University, and we were married at Munich on December 30th, 1891.

Her great-uncle, Leopold von Ranke, the German historian and author of the History of the Popes, had, many years previously, married my aunt, Clarissa Graves; so we were already connected, though not related by blood.

Fortunately the five step-children were an attraction to my wife, who succeeded in being a mother to all. If there were difficulties they were gradually overcome, and the five children of my second marriage were warmly welcomed by those of the first.

Our first child, Clarissa, was born in Taunton.

* * * *

I had dropped cricket in favour of lawn tennis when at Huddersfield, but I now found myself in what soon became one of the best centres of amateur county cricket in England. Those were the days of Hewett, that fine left-handed bat, and Samuel Woods, who succeeded him as our captain; of the stylish young Oxonian players, Hill, and the brothers Palairet, and that quick, clean wicket-keeper, Newton, the son of a local squire. Our professionals were little Nichols, a steady fast-medium bowler and a hard-hitting bat with a sound defence, and tall Tyler, a slow bowler who broke both ways at will and reminded me of Harry Arkwright, the great Harrovian, by his panther-like ease and activity when following up his own bowling, and the rapid way in which he sized up the strokes of incoming batsmen and altered his field to meet them.

As my boys Philip, Richard and Perceval passed into school and began to play the game, the men I

have named became their cricketing gods, and to get as near as possible to them when they were being cheered or chaired after a match was their great ambition. Richard remarked once to the others in an awed tone: 'Just fancy, Palairet himself spoke to me just now!' 'What did he say?' they asked eagerly. 'Get out of my light, you young beggar!' replied Richard, truthfully.

It is more than forty years since those cricket matches when Somerset, with its eight or nine amateurs and two or three professionals, rose to the third place in the County Championship, and since then I have lived twice as long in Surrey as in Somerset. Yet I never take up the paper during the cricket season without a friendly eye upon the doings of the Somerset team, a sigh for their defeats and a thrill of pleasure at their victories.

All the hopes and fears of two great Somerset wins against the champion counties, Surrey and York, I put into a brace of Somerset dialect ballads, the first of which, 'Zummerzet *v.* Zurrey,' was printed in Taunton. Sam Woods told my daughter, Susan Macaulay, who was matron of the convalescent hospital at Alexandria in which he was a patient during the Great War, that he always carried a copy of it about with him. I can vouch for the correctness of my dialect, for it was 'vetted' by my neighbour Elworthy, the author of the West Somerset Dictionary. Here is an extract: –

SURREY'S SECOND INNINGS

And still the shades they lengthened wi' Zurrey's lengthenin' score,
And our voemen's trust it strengthened as away the minutes wore;
And ten to one was offered 'twas bound to be a draw,
And our country's chance o' winnin' weren't worth a barley straw,
And but half an hour were wantin' to tha drawin' o' tha stomps,
When into Lockwood's wicket Woods' crooked lightnin' jomps.
Quick after he comes K. J. Key, but Tyler like a cat
Springs in and cutely catches un vrom off his very bat –
You should ha' heard the way we cheered! Next Brockwell he comes in,
And Tyler sens un down a ball wi' his most tricksy spin,
And up it goes, but at his toes young Muster V. T. Hill
He catches it, and at tha sight, Lord! how we all did yell!
And 'Hurry up, oh! hurry up!' we shouted out ta Zurrey,
And handsomely their batsmen bold they answered to our flurry.
And thirteen mortal minutes ez all wur leff us now,
And watch in hand we breathless stand ta mark each ball and blow.

Then Zammy rushes down tha pitch in our wustest
time o' need,
And swings a splendid yorker droo the stomps o'
Maurice Read.
And 'Hurry up again!' we cry, and 'Coom, look
sharp!' to Sharpe –
And quick and confident he comes, there wuz no need
to carp.
Then zeconds zeemed like minutes, and minutes
weary hours,
As Sharpe and Wood again wi'stood our bowlers'
desperate powers.
Vive – vour – dree minutes now wur lef'; they vielders
vlyin' pass
At every maiden over's end, like swallows o'er the grass.
Two minutes – one – vrom Zammy's arm a zudden
yorker zails,
And passes Sharpe, and like a shell explodes upon his
bails.
Then we went wild! Tha ztrain wur zuch, the pipple
burst the barriers,
And went vor the Pavilion like a pack o' huntin'
harriers,
And one oald gent his hat a-sent into tha river zaailin',
Another like a colt he jomps all vours across tha
paailin',
And a fat oald bloke went nigh to choake tell his
button I undunned –
And then a blubbered like a babe vor joy that we'd
a-wunned!

* * * *

In 1895 I received a call to continue my work in the Metropolitan District of Southwark, and parted from my Somerset and Devonshire friends with genuine regret, for I had spent more than ten years in happy association with them.

Some years before I moved to London I was invited by the National Union of Teachers, through their President, to represent them in Parliament. But as I had no private means and a large family I reluctantly declined the honour.

Had I accepted it, I should have helped hard to abolish the results examinations of our elementary schools; inspections in a fair sense they never were. For I had begun to realise with my friend, the Educational Chief, Mr. Edward Holmes, that children at school should be there to help, not to compete with each other.

The school in Sussex, the visit to which enabled him to realise this belief proved by the amazing development of its scholars' powers in all directions, without undue pressure of any kind, but out of sheer *camaraderie* between the teacher and her scholars and between the scholars themselves – that scholarships and prizes on the one hand and school punishments of all sorts on the other, are either undue concessions to the selfish side of young human nature or confessions of weakness on the part of masters and mistresses unable to maintain discipline by sheer love of their work and therefore compelled to enforce it with the cane or the unwilling committal to memory of poetry, that it should have been the pleasure of the victims to study.

CHAPTER XIV

LONDON EDUCATION IN THE 'NINETIES

Education in Southwark – Southwark schools in 1892 – Playing fields and graveyards – Systems of teaching – The end of examination by inspection.

HARDLY had I reached my headquarters when I was asked to meet the teachers of my new district, to acquaint them with my requirements. I guessed, and rightly, that they were chiefly interested in my standards of examination, and whilst ready to oblige them, I was myself much more anxious to deal with educational questions of larger consequence. In agreeing to meet them, I said I wanted to meet the Church and Board school managers as well.

A large meeting representative of both managers and teachers was held, with results so valuable that we decided to establish a standing conference, and to extend its personnel to include district members of the London School Board, teachers of Grammar and High Schools, Heads of Training Colleges, University Settlements and Technical Institutes, Librarians, and all others interested in a liberal education.

I became Chairman of this Conference, better known as the Southwark Educational Council, which

consisted of seventy-two members and met, usually, in the fine lecture-room of the Borough Road Polytechnic. When a new method of instruction was engaging attention such as Miss Nellie Dale's phonic system of teaching reading, or when teachers were anxious to get hints from such specialists as Miss Fogerty on voice production, lectures were given to eager listeners who carried their new-found knowledge into the schools.

These meetings became more and more social, and were generally preceded by a tea-party. The advantages were great. Teachers of various grades met and became friends, and men and women accustomed to strictly limited discussions at teachers' meetings grew interested in fresh aspects of education. Leading members of the School Board took an active part in the proceedings, and from year to year we had brilliant addresses from Bishop Welldon, Mrs. Sophie Bryant, Miss Adler, Sir Michael Sadler and Mr. Lewis Paton, not to mention others.

Nor was this all. The Executive fought for and obtained playgrounds for children in spaces caused by the destruction of slum buildings before they could again be built upon, provided opportunities for horticultural teaching in Southwark Park, and induced the Council to allow children during the slack hours of the day to go by tram to their playing-fields for a nominal fare.

When Battersea was added to my district I organised a similar Educational Council for the Boroughs of Battersea and Wandsworth. The movement spread,

and I was afterwards called upon to inaugurate Councils outside my own district, in Kensington, Islington and Stepney, and within it in Lambeth, Chelsea and Fulham. These were found by the Board of Education and the London School Board, and latterly by the Education Committee of the L.C.C., to be valuable auxiliaries in the cause of Metropolitan Education. By my chief, Sir Herbert Lewis, I was asked to form a Council at Norwich.

After a long absence from Somerset, I revisited Taunton to found a Council there, and last of all I helped to found one at Hampstead. Lord Haldane addressed the first meeting held by that now active body. After giving it his hearty blessing, he told us that we could look forward to two great measures, University, and Public School reform; and that he understood they were both up Mr. Fisher's sleeve. We are still looking.

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SOUTHWARK SCHOOLS IN THE 'NINETIES

Let us take a stroll through the Southwark of 1892. Beyond St. George's in the Borough we pass into a street with an unexpectedly interesting name, Tabard Street, which takes its title from that famous inn from which Chaucer's Pilgrims started on their way to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket at Canterbury.

Here we find ourselves in one of the poorest centres of all London, and in the midst of a population sunk in apathy, drunkenness and prostitution. An unusually

large number of children are playing about the streets. The air reeks with the smell of stale fish and decomposing vegetables; the roadway and gutters are strewn with paper and refuse of all kinds; not a glint of green leaves catches the eye, unless from the stalls of that poor greengrocer's shop at the corner, or from the fading flower-bunches that a ragged child is hawking along the street. Yet there is evidently an agricultural strain in these people, be they English or Irish, and some of them still cling with curious persistence to a country tradition. Cocks and hens frequent the lanes and courts, and chickens are fattened on the refuse of the street and of the costermonger's cart. The accommodation is too limited for the cow, and the pig is not permitted to penetrate into what would be such a happy hunting-ground for him amongst the waste in court and alley, but the goat is to be found here, supplying milk for one part of the year, and being hired out for cart-drawing for the rest of it. Hence fresh goat's milk, fresh eggs, and spring chickens are obtainable in the midst of all this misery.

As we pass a turning where a group of women are engaged in a noisy dispute, interlarded with much gross language, we come upon an apparently brand-new Board school with a fair-sized playground and three fine halls; handsome, up-to-date buildings, recently constructed out of the old Westcott Street Board School, and now renamed 'The Chaucer School.' Let us enter it and have a chat with the headmaster, as true a missionary as ever sailed from our shores to spend his life amongst savages.

When he took charge of the school years ago, he tells us, all was opposition. The children were encouraged by their parents to active insubordination. 'Gone out nicking' (stealing), was a common excuse for their absence from school, and the teachers were frequently jeered at and insulted on their way to and from their duties. They were at first so liable to these mobbings that they found it necessary to leave the school in a body, and even then had often to invoke police protection to escape molestation.

The thieves' lingo coupled with baby words like 'de, dis, dat, dere,' a total neglect of the letter 'h,' or a wild prodigality in its use, the tendency to drop or add final consonants or terminations at will, makes English composition a strangely difficult exercise in this school. The schoolmaster grapples eagerly with the subject, and has compiled a list of local irregularities in the use of the Queen's English which he attacks in detail. The sentences on the blackboard will give some idea of what he has to contend against. Here is an answer to a spelling test, this time given to boys and called 'The Ingenious Rat.' 'They was a carpenter oo try or sawts of plands to keep de oil in is bottels, but wor no use. Tell one die e hear a naws. He look rownd and soor a rat deep its tail into de oil and drorin it out of de vile liquid it off.'

Owing to the good-tempered patience of the teachers and their unceasing efforts for the welfare of the children, the opposition of the parents is now almost non-existent. Insubordination is practically unknown,

and there is a growing feeling of friendliness for the school and its teachers.

But, on entering the school one cannot but be struck by the pathetically jaded look of the scholars. They are evidently doing their best to attend, but there are clearly physical causes which interfere sadly with their powers of concentration. Most of the boys leave school for labour as soon as they reach the age of thirteen, and yet many of them have to work long before they leave school. Some are employed every evening and all day Saturday, sometimes all through Sunday, selling flowers, fish, newspapers or matches. Others have to work before school in the morning, during the midday recess, and again in the evening, helping their parents at brush or paper-bag making. Others attend the Borough market every morning in summer from half-past four to five o'clock, and return just in time for school, thoroughly tired out. The Board may well describe such schools as this as being 'of special difficulty.' All the more credit to the teachers who triumph over the difficulties.

A boy at 'The Chaucer' had broken his arm during the dinner hour, but though the master and I pressed him, he refused to be taken to the hospital, to have it set, till he had qualified for his afternoon attendance mark. Another boy, who had been notoriously dirty as a scholar, left for work. Some time after, he returned looking strangely spick and span, carrying a book which he had bought out of his little earnings. This he offered to the headmaster, to be given as a prize to the boy in the first class who kept himself cleanest.

No doubt he had profited by the leave-taking ceremony, which is a feature of this school.

At the end of the afternoon meeting the boy about to leave the school was called to the front of his class by the head teacher, and there presented with a written character, a letter of introduction to an employer, and his labour certificate. The master then gave him some friendly advice as to his conduct as a young workman, and after shaking hands with him invited his class-mates to signify their friendly wishes for his success in the usual manner, which they did by cheering heartily.

A child of eight was brought up to me, and told to tell me how she had saved her little sister. 'O it was nuthin, sir,' she said. 'You see, my baby let go my hand and runned acrost the road when I telled her not, and fell down clost to a great big horse, and I runned up before her and stood in his way and knocked up my head at him an' said, "You leave my baby alone," an' he went back and a kind gentleman pulled her off the road – and I scolded her for not holding my 'and, I tell you I did, sir!'

I took the late Lord Morpeth, at that time Chairman of the Works Committee of the London School Board, to one of my Bermondsey Schools to show him nearly four hundred infants in occupation of their playground. There was barely room for them to stand in it, and the boys were even in worse plight, for their small playground was on the roof of the school. To such dangerous devices were our educational authorities driven, to find room for the children to play in.

It was to supply one of the most pressing wants of the poorer districts of London by providing breathing and resting places for the old, and playgrounds for the young, in the midst of densely populated localities, that the Metropolitan Gardens Association was formed in the year 1882. In most cases grave-yards were the only open spaces available, and public opinion was slow to allow their use as gardens or playgrounds. But they were often in such a disgraceful state of neglect that any change would be for the better.

One Sunday in the year 1878 the Rev. H. R. Haweis told his congregation at St. James', Westmorland Street, that in a hasty walk through their own parish burial-ground in Paddington Street, Marylebone, he had met 'orange-peel, rotten eggs, cast off hair plaits, oyster-shells, crockery, newspapers with bread and meat, dead cats and five live ones,' and that on the grave of one Elizabeth Smith, 'in the very centre of the churchyard,' he found 'twelve old kettles, two coal-scuttles, three old hats, and an umbrella.' Some of the congregation doubted it, but they went to look and found it true. The little playground in Russel Court, Drury Lane, which was a graveyard attached to the parish of St. Mary le Strand, is immortalised as 'Tom all alone' in Dickens' *Bleak House*. When the Association got hold of it, it was little else than a heap of decaying rubbish thrown in from the surrounding houses, and the carcasses of eighteen cats were removed at once. It is now an asphalted recreation ground, and is often crowded with children using the swings and seats.

In most Elementary schools every teacher was supposed to teach every subject to his own class. And yet of the six or seven assistant masters or mistresses in a large school, one of them might be by far the best fitted to teach music, another science, or another drawing. Not a few head teachers were actually ignorant of the talents they hid under bushels amongst their subordinates, until it was shown that such special teaching as is common in the Grammar or High School might be judiciously used in the Elementary one. Some, anxious for cent. per cent. results, allowed their assistants to become mentally atrophied by giving them the same limited sphere of instruction from year to year. Others favoured the system of allowing their assistants to be promoted with their scholars for a certain way up the school, say to Standard IV, and then to fall back again to Standard I, in the belief that their mental equipment was not equal to dealing with the upper Standards.

It seemed probable that some teachers who were not good at general class work might be valuably employed in teaching their own special subjects to several other classes, while remaining responsible for their own. Their interest in that subject would be transmitted to their pupils, and when they came back to their own boys and girls after such a mental refreshment, and with added importance in their scholars' eyes from having been seen teaching their elder brothers and sisters, they would be able to handle them with far greater ease.

This system of specialization can, however, be

carried too far. I once recommended it to a very capable head teacher, who took it up warmly, but allowed no teacher to have a class of his own. Every one of them was a nomad. The mathematical specialist worked from class to class through the school, and so did all the others, with the result that at the end of every lesson on the Time Table there was a general post of teachers from class-room to class-room. The school had become a welter of classes without any of the mental or moral cohesion that a good class-teacher will give them, and inclined to spend too much of their time in criticising their temporary teachers. Specialisation is good; but it should be for half or quarter, not whole time.

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After being tried for a generation and found wanting, the system of school inspection by examination came to an end, and teachers and inspectors alike breathed more freely. Methods, not results, were now especially studied, for it was realised that if the teaching is good, good results are bound to follow.

The inspector visited the schools without notice, dropping in with none of the field-day fuss that accompanied the old annual inspection. He saw the school in its normal state, and not in an unnatural condition of fear and anxiety, and because the school had not been tuned up for a special effort, he would be better able to discover its strong and weak points.

All this change was for the good. If the inspector found serious grounds for dissatisfaction, he was at

liberty to take the teacher's place himself and question the scholars upon any branch of knowledge in which he suspected undue weakness; or where the teaching appeared to be defective throughout, he was empowered to follow his inspection by a searching examination of the whole school.

I missed, however, the opportunity which the old fixed inspection gave me of making or renewing acquaintance with the managers, and conferring with them about the interests of their schools. Under the new plan it was quite a chance whether one met any manager in the school, and if one sent for the school manager who lived nearest, the chances were that he would be out.

I was not permitted to inform them on what day I proposed to hold an inspection, but I did inform them that as soon as I had inspected the group of schools for which they were responsible, I should like to meet both them and the head teachers in conference. I felt strongly that the inspector should be in almost as close touch with the managers as with the teachers in his district.

These meetings proved fruitful, for I was able to give a much more detailed account of what I had observed at my inspection than was contained in the short official reports that only reached them from the Board of Education after a considerable interval. These now served as summaries of what I had already told them, and were therefore readily understood. I did not grudge this encroachment upon my leisure, though it meant a great deal of extra work after school

hours, and on my retirement in 1910 after forty years' service I was chosen, in recognition of this work, to succeed Sir John Cockburn as Chairman of the Representative Managers of the L.C.C. Schools.

CHAPTER XV

NEW MOVEMENTS

The Irish Literary Society – T. W. Rolleston – The Irish Texts Society – Mr. Ginnell seizes the Chair – Folk Song in Ireland and Wales – The National Home Reading Union.

Late in the spring of 1891, at the invitation of the council of the newly formed Irish Literary Society of London, which had been organised by Sir Charles Gavan Duffy and a set of his literary friends, I presided over an inaugural meeting in Hart Street, Bloomsbury. An address was given by Dr. Stopford Brooke upon 'The Need and Use of Getting Irish Literature into the English Tongue.'

'Poetry,' he said, 'has always wanted, along with the present, an imaginative world in the past into which to dip for subjects; and we have here in English poetry pretty well exhausted the old realms of human story. The tale of Arthur will have to lie fallow for a time. We have had enough of the Greek stories of late; enough of Italian Mediævalism, whether its tales be of saints or sinners. The Norse tales will also for a time be laid aside; and though they have a powerful humanity, they have little love of nature. We have been even forced of late to go to India for our subjects.

But the Irish stories are as yet untouched; and they have imagination, colour, romance of war and love, terrible and graceful supernaturalism, a passionate humanity, and a vivid love of natural beauty and sublimity.'

There had been several precursors of this society, including one which the Iron Duke had declined to join 'because he had not the honour of the personal acquaintance of the gentleman who had invited him to the constituting meeting.'

Plans for the formation of the society had been hatched in Mr. W. B. Yeats's rooms in Fitzroy Square. The young active spirits in the movement were Yeats, my cousin T. W. Rolleston, Lionel Johnson, W. M. Crook, Frank Fahy, and W. P. Ryan. Rolleston was a fine Classical and Modern language scholar – he actually translated Walt Whitman into German – and possessed great charm. In appearance he resembled Charles Stewart Parnell, and was more than once mistaken for him. We were much together, studying Yeats's *Countess Cathleen and Other Poems*, and talking over the affairs of the I.L.S. of which he was Hon. Secretary and upon whose committee I had been placed.

Rolleston was a man of some private means but anxious for suitable permanent employment. I was on friendly terms with Lady Aberdeen, who at the time was keenly interested in Irish industries and anxious to obtain a most competent secretary. I introduced Rolleston to her, and he was appointed to the post with the very best results to the movement.

He not only organised it successfully in Ireland, but took a leading part in arranging for Irish exhibits at the St. Louis Exhibition, in which Irish-Americans showed great interest. Rolleston had to resign the secretaryship of the I.L.S., and I succeeded him.

My secretarial duties were more arduous than I had bargained for. After my official work, I had to spend some hours most days of the week at the rooms of the society, attending committee meetings, reporting these to Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, our President, who was in France, arranging for the society's lectures and concerts, and afterwards for their 'Original Nights,' and so on.

Our rooms in Hart Street were very badly placed for our purposes, and the meetings soon began to be scantily attended. We accordingly held a council of war, presided over by Barry O'Brien. To this meeting, quite improperly, O'Brien invited John O'Leary, the famous old ex-Fenian. He sat a little aside from the conference table, but when I put in a strong plea for a move from Bloomsbury, where we were in danger of collapse, and O'Brien hesitated to back my opinion, O'Leary broke in 'Mr. Graves is quite right. This is a God-forsaken hole, and the sooner you quit it the better!' His advice was taken, and we moved on to Adelphi Terrace, into rooms now occupied by the Savage Club, and flourished there.

In our members' room was a good library of Irish books, constantly being added to by gifts from members. Here Eleanor Hull and other Irish language enthusiasts learned Gaelic in the classes which we

thought it our duty to provide for them, and in which we had the co-operation of the newly formed branch of the Gaelic League whose members shared our rooms. Not a few of these Gaelic Leaguers went over to Ireland and have since distinguished themselves in Gaelic speech, whilst Miss Drury, now Mrs. Costello, the Irish Senator, was laying the foundations of the Gaelic knowledge which has since enabled her to bring out her fine collection of Galway and Mayo airs with the original Irish words to which they go.

I think that the idea of our 'Original Nights' was my own, for I had feared that we might get too much into the commonplace rut of English literary societies, and also thought that those of us who had made some way in the pursuit of letters ought to give a helping hand to younger workers in the same field. Besides, the publishers' lists were constantly showing the names of new Irish writers whom we hoped to attract to our society. These 'Original Nights' became a great success, and remain a standing feature in the society's programmes as a stimulus to young authors.

Among other works we published a series of historical papers, edited by Barry O'Brien, Parnell's biographer, and an edition of the Petrie collection of Irish music prepared by Sir Charles Villiers Stanford.

The Gaelic League was not the only Irish movement that our society assisted, for it also started the Irish Texts Society, an equally learned and a more purely literary movement. We had talked over in committee the possibilities of this fresh departure, and I was asked to go down to Oxford and see Professor Yorke

Powell, who had already befriended us by delivering a fine lecture on the influence of Irish ballad poetry upon English verse. He agreed to come up to town and preside at a meeting that was to constitute the new society.

He was a past master in work of the kind, and we could not have got a more competent or better adviser; but when he met us and was formally voted to the chair, Mr. Laurence Ginnell, M.P., suddenly cried out: 'I oppose that! No Welshman shall ever take the chair at an Irish meeting as long as I am present!'– and, rushing forward, sat down in the chair himself. This was not to be tolerated, so our stalwart treasurer, Mr. Daniel Mescal, and a couple more of us, carried the usurper, chair and all, into the passage outside, locked the door, and set a guard upon him until he finally took his departure, vowing vengeance.

We had a most amicable meeting, appointed a secretary, and made lists of Celtic scholars whom we desired to become members of the society and to contribute to its publications. At the end of a year we had only secured forty subscribers. We decided therefore to add to the dignity of the secretary by making him a vice-president, and to our own efficiency by electing two new secretaries,– Miss Eleanor Hull and Miss Norma Borthwick, a Highland Gael.

Both were women of the highest qualifications and the best business ability; and within a couple of years the membership of the Irish Texts Society swelled from forty to four hundred. A striking personality joined the I.L.S. at this time in Mrs. Kate Lee, the

wife of an English M.P. with West Indian estates, who presented us with a much-needed piano and helped us at all our concerts.

After a conversation which took place between Mrs. Kate Lee, Mr. Plunket Greene, my brother Charles and myself it was decided that an attempt should be made to draw all collectors of folk-song together into one society for the promotion of its best interests. Our committee invited Mr. Fuller Maitland, Miss Lucy Broadwood, and others to discuss the situation, and if possible to arrange for co-operation between the folk-song collectors of Great Britain and Ireland. The meeting went off well and the Folk Song Society was started. Mrs. Kate Lee was appointed its secretary, and during the short remainder of her life-time there could not have been a more active organiser of the movement. Not only did she collect many folk songs both in Ireland and in England, but she lectured upon and sang them before audiences all over the country, and was specially retained by the Folk Lore Society to deal with that side of their work.

Mrs. Lee was particularly successful in the Broads, where her husband had a yacht. One plan of hers was to get into conversation with fishermen off duty, hum an air to them which she knew came from their part of the country, and ask them if they could give her the words to it, thus tempting them to supply her with fresh tunes and songs. News reached her of some old songs which were known only to certain farmers who sang them at a country inn on the Broads. Failing to secure these jealously-guarded airs by ordinary means,

she answered an advertisement for the post of waitress at this inn, and was duly engaged. When the farmers had settled down after dinner to their beer and tobacco and started singing their carefully-hoarded songs, she stood in the background, pencil in hand, noting down the words and music for the benefit of her society.

After a while the work of the Folk Song Society extended so widely that it was found necessary to subdivide its activities. I was asked by Mr. Fuller Maitland when he was chairman of the Folk Song Society, to try and capture a strong Welsh contingent. Accordingly I prepared a paper on the general question of folksongs for the Cymmrodorion meetings held at the Carnarvon National Eisteddfod of 1906. My paper was followed by another, upon Welsh folk-song, by H. R. Reichel, Principal of Bangor University College, now Sir Harry Reichel. He discussed the existing collections of Welsh folk-songs, and suggested that if folk-song were given that place in Welsh popular music which it had reached in Hungary, Norway and Russia, we ought to look forward to the creation of a national school of Welsh music. 'Just as Grieg,' he said, 'is permeated by the spirit of Norwegian folk-song, Liszt of the Hungarian, Tschaikowsky and Rubenstein of the Russian and Villiers Stanford of the Irish, so, if we are to have a school of Welsh composers, it must be broad based upon a musical genius of Cymry as displayed in the Alaw Cymreig.' But we have not yet heard a Welsh Rubenstein.

I had been sent to capture Welsh members for the Folk Song Society, but the meeting took a different

line. A general discussion followed at the end of which it was unanimously resolved to form an independent Welsh Folk Song Society, and a provisional committee was appointed. Many of my Welsh freinds had demurred when I stated my belief that several thousand Welsh folk-songs were still to be collected. Most of them seemed quite satisfied with such old favourites as 'The Men of Harlech,' 'The Bells of Aberdovey,' and 'Jenny Jones.' But my expectations have been justified, and under the efficient editorship of Dr. Lloyd Williams the Welsh Folk Song Society's Journal has published a vast body of beautiful airs hitherto unknown to the public, while Mrs. Mary Davies, Lady Lewis and others have made fine collections of their own in Anglesey and other parts of Wales.

Already the hope expressed by Sir Harry Reichel that this devotion to national folk-song would lead to a national school of music is bearing fruit, and British composers are basing their writing upon the rich foundation of folk-song which has recently been laid bare.

Meanwhile an Irish Folk Song Society had been formed in London. Mrs. Milligan Fox, its active secretary, after ransacking Ireland, actually visited the United States in her search for old Irish airs. Many had been carried across the Atlantic by emigrants at the time of the potato famine, and even earlier by Connaught men sold into slavery in Cromwellian days and sent to the West Indies. It is believed that Irish airs were picked up by the negroes and that some of the Plantation Songs are really of Irish origin.

This appears to have been proved in the case of those arranged by Brahms.

The Irish Literary Society is now established at 39 Grosvenor Place, S.W.1. Richard Ashe King, that brilliant and eloquent man of letters, is its President, a position I twice held myself.

* * * *

At the outset of my career in London I came into touch with the Rev. John B. Paton, editor of the *Contemporary Review* and the leader of many philanthropic movements. He had lately started the National Home Reading Union after proving the value of a kindred association in the United States. In earlier times, Reading Clubs had been common in various parts of the kingdom. Robert Burns had been secretary to a club of the kind. Works of public interest were purchased and circulated amongst members, who met at each others' houses to exchange and talk over the books.

Paton with his N.H.R.U. was not catering only for the educated classes. He was out, he said, to create a People's University amongst the British masses, who were now compelled to read under the Education Act of 1870, but were being flooded with gutter-literature by unscrupulous publishers. Subjects for reading suitable to average tastes were chosen from year to year, while authorities on these subjects recommended the best books about them and wrote articles upon them in the Home Reading Magazines. There were at first three such magazines, one for

juniors, a second for general, and a third for special readers. Books were circulated to each branch of the Union, and the members constituted themselves into Circles at which the books were read aloud and then discussed. Each Circle was presided over by a Circle-leader who called the meetings and took the chief part in them.

I got the teachers in twelve of my Southwark schools to experiment with Reading Circles, assistant teachers acting as Circle-leaders. All proved successful, and the then School Board adopted the system throughout their schools, where it still remains rooted. Thousands of our Elementary school-children have profited by the good reading that they thus enjoyed. The N.H.R.U. has not only found a secure hold in this country; it has spread also into the Dominions and is going strong in Canada, Australia and in South Africa.

CHAPTER XVI

MAINLY FAMILY

Mainly family – Bernard Shaw's practical joke – Some stories of my children – My father's death and an appreciation of him by Primate Alexander – Outline of my eight brothers' and sisters' lives and careers – My first Eisteddfod and subsequent Welsh verse translations.

In June 1894, we moved into a new house in Lauriston Road, near Wimbledon Common. It was simply designed, without billiard-room or conservatory, but with bedrooms enough to supply the demands of a growing family. Large over-hanging eaves and green Cumberland slates were special features, and an engraving of the house appeared in *The Architect and Builder*. A fine chestnut tree overshadowed the garden; 'guessed to be worth £100' by the American Ambassador Choate who contemplated taking the house one summer. We named it Red Branch House after the Knights of the Red Branch, celebrated in Irish chivalry for their poetry and hospitality, and from one of whom my Macartney grandmother was said to be descended. In further justification of the name we soon could show red hawthorn blossom, red yew and holly berries, and other red branches in the garden.

In this house my three younger sons were born, Robert, Charles, and John. The two latter received a good grounding in the High School kindergarten from Miss Nellie Dale, inventor of a phonetic method of teaching, and Miss Penny. Here we lived happily for twenty-five years, only leaving after the war, when we no longer required so large a house, owing to the gradual dispersal of our children.

In Wimbledon we had many friends, especially among the members of the Literary and Scientific Society to which we were introduced by Mr. Richardson Evans and Mr. Moran, an old Home Office colleague of mine. Our Shakespeare Reading Society often met at Red Branch House, and we were most fortunate in having Mr. Patrick Kirwan, the Shakesperean actor and producer, to coach us. Bernard Shaw was once present in the drawing-room of a friend of ours at Wimbledon when the subject of Spirit music cropped up. While he was sitting in the half light with his back to the piano, weird but beautiful music was heard. Shaw professed to be astounded at these mysterious sounds, and our host was so deeply impressed that he wrote a letter to the papers describing the phenomena and mentioning Shaw's name as a fellow witness. Next day Shaw confessed that he had himself been playing the piano with his hands behind his back.

On July 24th, 1895 (two days after my 49th birthday) Robert was born, so called after my beloved uncle. It was said by Clarissa that the baby was a late birthday present for her father. When her second brother

Charles was born, the day after her own seventh birthday, she said, 'I don't mind mother taking him, but I am sure he was really meant as a birthday present for me!' Robert's second name, von Ranke, his mother's family name which later caused him trouble at Charterhouse and in the Army, was given to him at a time when the relations between England and Germany were far more cordial than those between England and France. As Robert has recorded in *Good-bye to All That*, his happiest holidays were spent in his grandfather's country house near Munich, originally a hunting-box of the Electors (not Kings) of Bavaria. His grandfather was a Professor of Medicine at Munich University, Head of the children's hospital there, and he and his family were ennobled for his many acts of public spirit. He was Vice-President of the Agricultural Society of Bavaria, worked for the supply of pure water and pure milk for Munich, and gave written advice to every woman who notified the birth of a child, urging breast-feeding. There were then many unwanted children in Munich, who were given into the care of women who were euphemistically called Angel-makers, as a large proportion of the children died through cruelly unsuitable food.

When a young man my father-in-law had a friend who was clever, but small and hunch-backed, while he himself was tall and handsome. In *Kladeradatch*, the German *Punch*, they were represented as meeting after some years. 'How are you, Ranke?' says the little man, Jordan. 'Why, we grew up together!' 'I remember that you made the attempt!' replies his

tall friend. Later he had been in charge of the German Hospital in London and had gone to the Crimea as a surgeon attached to the British Army, where he became the special friend of Dr. Robert Macdonnell, the Dublin Surgeon. On his return to London after the war was over, Ranke married Miss Luise Tiarks, daughter of the astronomer, and had ten children by her of whom Robert's mother Amy is the eldest. Robert speaks of his grandmother as 'frightened,' but as a matter of fact she quite held her own with her tall and lordly husband. She was, however, so unselfish and charitable that it was to the advantage of the family that the purse-strings were controlled by her husband, though it was she who had brought money into the family. From her came also the fund of dry humour which has descended to Robert. A young friend of hers was inordinately proud of her small waist. 'Really, Florence,' she commented, 'if I had so small a waist as yours, I should put a little wadding round it.'

When married, her chief happiness was in her children, and she told her daughter Amy that, if she did not marry, she would not so much pity her for not having a husband, as for having to do without children of her own. Her father, Dr. Ludwig Tiarks, had settled in England at Greenwich Observatory. Finding, however, that, as a German, he could never be Astronomer Royal, he took other work, and acted as England's chief representative in fixing the boundary between Canada and the United States. He has left behind him an account written both on paper

and birch bark of the many months spent by the Commission among the Red Indians and Lapps. During this time the head of the American Commission died, and his fellow members requested the U.S.A. Government to put Dr. Tiarks in his place, as the head of both Commissions. He himself died young and, as children of five and six, his orphan daughters came to London where Luise married Dr. Ranke after the Crimean War. In 1857 their eldest child, Robert's mother, was born in London and thus became a British subject. The following year the family settled at Munich.

Geheimrat Heinrich von Ranke, my father-in-law, was a strict disciplinarian when I brought my wife and children to stay with him, and Robert often incurred his displeasure for lingering behind on excursions. Once he was left behind altogether, when the rest of the family were taken for a drive. On our return, he showed us his first poem, a charming lyric on the harvest.

The children often learnt hymns by heart and said them with their prayers. One night when Clarissa, aged three, reached the lines 'Thou hast clothed me, warmed me, fed me, listen to my evening prayer,' she turned round and said 'But I really feed myself.' After a long absence Canon Beck and his wife came to visit us at Wimbledon. Clarissa was astonished to see them. 'I thought you had gone to heaven,' she told the Canon. He was delighted.

When Amy went upstairs one evening to hear the children's prayers Robert asked her: 'Mother, if you

were to die, would you leave me any money?' Without waiting for an answer he went on, 'If it were as much as five pounds, I could buy a bicycle with it.' 'Oh, but Robby,' she said, 'you would surely rather have me than a bicycle?' 'Well, you see,' he explained, 'I could ride to your grave on it.' He was really devoted to her.

In the summer of 1899, a few months before the birth of my son Charles, my father died at the age of eighty-seven. The Palace passed into other hands and, as Parknasilla had already been sold, we no longer had a home in Ireland. But we were anxious to leave behind us in Limerick a worthy memorial of my father. This took the form of a beautiful Irish-Celtic Cross with inscriptions in Irish, Latin and English verse by Dr. Hyde, Professor Tyrrell, and myself.

Archbishop Alexander, Primate of All Ireland, sent me an appreciation of his old friend and colleague from which the following is taken:

'I found him kind in no ordinary degree. He could convey advice which he considered salutary or necessary but which might prove a little unpleasant to one's self-complacency in a manner which showed at once the kindness of his heart and the delicacy of his tact.

'The pulpit of the Chapel Royal was somewhat of a trial for one who had never spoken in public except to rustic or remote audiences. I am quite sure that my sermons there were too elaborate as well as too florid and rhetorical. The Dean never spoke to me on the subject until after a sermon upon a Trinity Sunday. He had occasion to write upon some other matter, and told me at the close of his letter that he particularly

liked in my last sermon a certain manliness of tone, sound judgment, and absence of rhetorical straining. All this was put with the most evident kindness, without the slightest indication of sarcasm, but it conveyed to me a very useful lesson.

'He was one of the finest specimens of a dignified Irish clergyman of the old school whom I have ever seen. He had the graceful courtesy of a perfect gentleman. New needs of the Church may form and are forming characters more suitable, perhaps, in the rough times which are before us for the work of the Episcopate in a democratic age, but the old type is beautiful with a beauty which demands a reverent recognition.'

To turn back to my own brothers and sisters:

From being a difficult child, Helen had grown up a wise and unselfish woman and made an excellent wife to Harry Lyttleton Powys, a Captain in the 52nd Light Infantry and the second son of the Bishop of Sodor and Man, one of Lord Lilford's family. She had two children, John, who died during the Afghan war, and Norah.

Arnold passed the first examination for the Indian Civil with flying colours, but had an attack of ophthalmia just before the second. This prevented him from revising his notes on Law, and in this one subject, though actually his strongest, he failed. It was a real calamity, for the energy and organising ability which he later so abundantly showed as Secretary to the Irish Charity Commission, and in his voluntary work as the father of Irish Technical Education, would have

taken him far as an Indian administrator. He married Miss Constance Weatherby, and had five children, only two of whom survived the Great War and its effects.

Lily had been christened Augusta Caroline, but we came to call her and Rosamund Lily and Rosy from their contrasting colouring as babies, and these names stuck to them through life. Both were handsome and capable women, and fine musicians. Lily was such a good walker that an old Kerry woman once cried out after her as she passed on a fifteen mile climb in the Sneem mountains, 'Begorra, Miss, you'd tramp the Universe!' When over fifty she visited Japan and China. Here her girl companion was carried in a palanquin while Lily 'tramped' resolutely beside it. She might have married, but after my mother's death in 1872 she preferred to keep house for my father. This she did for nearly thirty years, both at his Limerick palace and at Parknasilla. She took a leading part in all local movements of a philanthropic nature, and did everything she could to make up for the lessening activity of the Bishop as his age increased. He might have retired before his death, and it was once said that Bishop Graves possessed every Christian virtue but that of resignation, but he preferred to stick it out to the end and died in harness.

Rosy married Massie, afterwards Admiral Sir Massie Blomfield, a nephew of a Bishop of London, and cousin of Sir Reginald Blomfield, the architect. They spent most of their married life in Egypt, where Sir Massie became Captain of the Port of Alexandria.

During Arabi Pasha's rebellion he had to take the Port treasure to a British warship, in a longboat manned by mutinous oarsmen. With a revolver in his hand, ready for use against the first man to drop his oar, he steered it to safety. While the rioting was at its height, his two boys Charlie and Hugh were missed, and agonising hours followed this discovery. It turned out that a faithful nurse, fearing that they might be murdered, had carried them off into hiding until the worst was over. Charlie fell in the Great War, but Hugh has survived it.

My brothers Charles and Robert were both scholars of Marlborough. Charles went up to Oxford and later became a musical critic on the *Guardian*. Subsequently he assisted Mr. St. Loe Strachey in editing the *Cornhill*, acting at the same time as Assistant Editor of the *Spectator*. He has been a member of the *Punch* table for many years, and wrote 'Mr. Punch's History of the Great War,' and his 'History of Modern England.' He is also the biographer of Sir George Grove, Alexander Macmillan and Sir Hubert Parry.

Robert went into the Consular Service and, while stationed at Erzeroum, won a C.M.G. for his action during the Armenian massacres. After prolonged service in the near East, he was sent as financial adviser to the Ottoman Government, who offered him the Inspector Generalship of Armenia, which he wisely refused. In the Great War he served on Sir Ian Hamilton's staff and became a Brigadier-General. Had the Dardenelles been forced, he could have rendered invaluable service at Constantinople, owing

to his wide knowledge of modern Turkey. After the war he received a K.C.M.G. and has done much for the repatriation of refugee Greeks. He married Miss Bessie Thomson and has one son.

Ida married Sir Richard Poore on his return from the dangerous Gordon Relief Expedition up the Nile. He rose rapidly to the rank of Admiral, and she accompanied him to the West Indies and later went to Sydney when he was in charge of the Australian fleet. For the first six months of the Great War Sir Richard was in command at the Nore, retiring in 1915. Ida has published two volumes of naval memories and several works of fiction. Her only son was killed in the Great War.

In June, 1897, immediately after Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, we first visited Wales, at the advice of our friend Sir William Preece, the pioneer of wireless telegraphy. His suggestion was, 'If you don't mind roughing it, go to Harlech. You will find it a beautiful place, reasonable in its prices, and unspoiled by trippers.' We soon decided that Sir William Preece was right, and spent that summer, the first of many in Harlech, in two houses on Bronwen Terrace, which commanded a perfect view of the Snowdon range and Cardigan Bay. Our family was already so large that one house could not accommodate us all, and we realised that it would cost no more in the end to have a Parknasilla of our own at Harlech.

On a brilliant September day we were blackberrying upon a rocky eminence below a steep mountain side with a beautiful prospect westwards to the sea and

northwards past Glyn woods into Snowdonia. Amy was so overcome by its beauty that she broke out, 'I'd like to die here.' 'Why not live here first?' I suggested. To this she agreed, and got into treaty at once with John Lloyd, a local farmer, who owned the site.

But Welshmen in country parts are slow to make up their minds over such matters, and often slower still to incur legal expenses over them. So Lloyd, who claimed descent from a line of Welsh Kings, not only answered my wife's letters at astronomical intervals, but in the end refused to move at all until she promised to pay his lawyer as well as her own. These preliminaries dragged on for six months, and it was not until the summer of 1899 that the new house was ready for occupation. We asked a good authority the Welsh for 'towards Ireland' and on his advice named our new home, 'Erinfa.' It was the first new house built at Harlech for many a year, and the contract had to be divided between a local mason and a firm of carpenters at Llanbedr.

Early in the new century I began to turn from English to Celtic literature, and when Lord Castletown of Upper Orrery and Mr. Fournier d'Albe had brought into being the first Pan-Celtic Congress in my native Dublin, I joined in. The Welsh Bards were on their best behaviour in a foreign country, and did not walk in procession, as they were then in the habit of doing in Wales, with top-hat or bowlers over their Gorsedd robes, and brandishing or supporting themselves with umbrellas. Then the formation of the Gorsedd

Circle in the Lord Mayor's garden at the back of Dorset Street, the claim of Cornwall, which has lost its Celtic tongue and national consciousness, to be admitted to the Congress, and the plea of Mr. William Gibson, now Lord Ashbourne, for a general return to the old Irish dress, which he had himself assumed—all lent interest to the proceedings. Since then Celtic Congresses have been held in every Celtic country, even in Cornwall and Man, and the following lyric of mine has been accepted as the rallying song of the six Celtic nations and translated into all of their tongues by their leading poets.

THE SONG OF THE HEATHER

A blossom there blows that scoffs at the snows
And faces, root-fast, the rage of the blast,
Yet sweetens a sod no slave ever trod
Since the mountains up-reared their altars to God.
That flower of the free is the heather, the heather!
It springs where the sea and the land strive together.
Six Nations are we; yet beneath its proud feather
To-day we are one, wheresoever we be.

Our blossom is red as the life-blood we shed
In liberty's cause, under alien laws,
When O'Neill and Lochiel and Llewelyn drew steel
For Erin's and Alba's and Cambria's weal.
Then our couch, when we tired, was the heather, the heather!
Its beacon we fired in blue and black weather,
Its mead-cup inspired, as we pledged it together
To the Prince of our choice or the maid most admired.

Let the Saxon and Dane bear rule o'er the plain,
On the hem of God's robe is our sceptre and globe;
For the Lord of all Light made His home on the height
And to Heaven from the Mount rose up in men's sight.
And the blossom and bud of the heather, the heather,
Is like His dear blood dropped hither and thither,
From all evil to purge and evermore urge
Each son of the Celt to the goal of all good.

I met Fournier d'Albe first in Wales, engineering the Dublin Congress at the National Eisteddfod, and with that object in view bringing Irish men of letters under the notice of the Gorsedd. To him, therefore, I am indebted for being made a Gorsedd Bard at the Festiniog Eisteddfod. This distinction, shared by my wife, appeared to me to be of so merely complimentary a character that I endeavoured to justify it. I began, therefore, to try my hand at turning the Welsh lyrics in Brinley Richards' 'Songs of Wales' into English verse, helped by my neighbour, Miss Ethel Holland Thomas, who later became Lady Isambard Owen. Years before I had been introduced to these Welsh airs by my first wife, who played them on her harp with a power that had charmed Ruskin. I now made a special study of Welsh poetic measures.

The Board of Education had wisely decided that in future the folk-songs of the various nationalities of the United Kingdom should form the basis of the musical instruction in our elementary schools, and a list of the most suitable folk and national songs was drawn up under the advice of Dr., now Sir Arthur Somervell,

then Government Inspector of music. Some five and thirty Welsh airs were included in a total of two hundred. Messrs. Boosey undertook to bring out a National Song Book on these lines, to be edited by Sir Charles Stanford. But when the Welsh authorities were consulted as to the English words to be included in their section of the work, they pointed out that few of these corresponded with the Welsh originals. By this time, however, I had myself written English words to many of the best Welsh airs, and a large number of these were included in the new collection.

But my most important attempts to bring Welsh poetry into English equivalents will be found in my volumes *Welsh Poetry Old and New* and *Ceiriog Hughes's Poems*, translated by me into corresponding English verse, the first with an introduction by the present 'Archbishop of Wales,' the second dedicated to Professor T. Gwynn Jones, but for whose literary encouragement I should not have undertaken it.

CHAPTER XVII

THE RISING GENERATION

Arthur à Becket's penny *Punch*, *John Bull* – Godley's 'Coronation Eclogue' – Physical education in Elementary schools – My *Contemporary Review* article upon it and what came of it – Retirement from the Inspectorate of Schools and appointment and work as Chairman of the London Representative School Managers.

In 1903, the year in which my youngest son, John, was born, I combined with Arthur à Becket in editing *John Bull* – not a continuation of the High Church Tory paper, nor the *John Bull* which, though its founder and chief brain-carrier has been discredited, is still one of the best sellers on the bookstalls. Ours was a weekly comic paper which à Becket wished to be regarded as a penny *Punch*. He had himself been assistant editor of that journal, and his 'Recollections of the Punch Round Table' were a leading feature of ours. Harry Furniss and Max Beerbohm were our chief caricaturists; other illustrators were Percy French and J. B. Monsell. The Rev. A. Cyril Pearson, father of Sir Arthur Pearson, was puzzle editor.

A. D. Godley, the Oxford public orator, gave us a delicious Coronation Eclogue in the form of a dialogue between Civis and Pastor. The shepherd cannot afford two windows offered him by the citizen from

which to see the procession, and is overcome by disappointment. But the citizen now offers to give him the two windows, on condition that he allows him to put up a big soap advertisement in one of his fields. The bargain is thus struck between them:

CIVIS: Saponum longe detergentissimus, ille est
quem facio: vestes, crede, lavare nequit:
cujus saponis si me præconia passim
inter agros gratis proposuisse sines,
ecce tibi geminas cupio donare fenestras!
hoc tibi lugenti quod medeatur erit.

PASTOR:
O patriæ vindex, O quo non justior alter,
O claros inter commemorande viros,
pone loco quovis, quævis præconia pone,
et lætæ titulos intueantur oves!'

Our *John Bull* had a short but merry life, the last number appearing less than a year from the start.

In the year 1904 I became associated with the Marchioness of Londonderry as an active member of her Irish Industries Committee in London. I once got into conversation with her on the subject of the physical education of the people, in which she took a deep interest among the miners in Northumberland, where her husband was a large colliery owner. 'I lay as much stress,' she said, 'upon the physical education of women as I do on that of men; for a woman's frame is the envelope out of which man proceeds.' She

suggested my writing an article on physical education in primary schools for some leading English periodical. The article was published in the *Contemporary Review* for June, 1904.

At that time there was a proved physical deterioration of the masses, due to the congested conditions in the metropolis and larger towns and the tendency to burn the candle of childhood at both ends, by sending children to school for five and a half hours a day and also employing them before, between, and after school hours in occupations over which legislation had not yet sought control. The playgrounds for elementary school children were either mere school-yards or, when of reasonable size, were not occupied for more than a quarter of an hour at a time during school hours. They were little used for organised games, hardly at all on the Saturday whole holiday, and only then owing to the co-operation of unselfish masters and mistresses and members of school missions in their neighbourhood. The parks and playing fields, to which a limited number of children had access, were few and far between.

Mr. Corsie, an Orkney man, and the headmaster of Eltringham Street Boys' School, Southwark, was so painfully impressed by the want of physique of his London scholars, as compared with that of the young Scots amongst whom he had been brought up, that he at once set to work as a physical reformer. As the result of a carefully thought-out system of training, he succeeded within six years in raising the average height of the boys in his football team by nearly three

inches and their average chest measurement to the respectable figure of 31.6 inches. But Mr. Corsie and his fellow enthusiasts were not in a position to create a crusade in favour of organised games, in spite of the marked physical degeneration of the people in congested areas.

When I put forward my proposals in 1904, the reply was, 'You must first alter the education code so as to allow that reasonable time for playing organised games should be provided under it.' 'Are the rules of the Board of Education so rigid,' I asked, 'as not to admit of longer spells of play during school hours, or could not arrangements be made for a weekly or fortnightly half-holiday to be set apart for organised games?' I had hoped, owing to Lord Londonderry's interest in the question, that the Board of Education would have amended their code, and was disappointed when the matter was not taken up. It was consoling, however, to receive a letter from the New Zealand Minister of Education to say that my suggested scheme was about to be tried in the New Zealand primary schools. Nearly twenty-five years afterwards the New Zealand representative in London assured me that it had caused a marked improvement in the physique of the young New Zealander.

Then the unexpected happened. Mr. Augustine Birrell, on succeeding to Lord Londonderry, accepted an invitation to meet His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools at a dinner-party which we gave in his honour. I was seated next to him, and in the course of conversation he turned to me and said : "Well, Graves, have

you any educational ideas which want airing?' I replied, 'Yes, will you allow me to send you them?' Within a few days he wrote saying that he heartily approved of my games scheme, and was asking our Chief Inspector, Mr. Edmund G. A. Holmes, to consult with me about introducing an article into the new code. Holmes and I accordingly drafted an article of a permissive, not compulsory character, providing for 'A period occupied during the school hours, under arrangements approved by the local educational authority, in properly organised games for older children under competent supervision and instruction.'

Mr. Birrell accepted it, and it became law. The article brought about a complete change in the physical side of elementary school life, and helped to diminish the number of C3's in the population.

We made it permissive and not compulsory, for the sad reason that by far the greater number of elementary schools were without suitable playgrounds or the access to playing fields. The question also arose as to how far elementary teachers, still under the anxious spell of the results system of education, would be ready to spare sufficient time from the ordinary school subjects to make the teaching of these games effective. But fortunately at the next Easter meeting of National Elementary Teachers, now the N.U.T., a considerable majority supported the permissive introduction of these games into the school curriculum. The educational authorities followed suit and above all the London County Council, whose attitude was extremely generous, for not only did they set out to

improve their school playgrounds but they threw open the L.C.C. Parks for the use of elementary scholars, providing them with cricket and football pitches and tennis grounds. They even went so far as to find football posts and balls, cricket bats, balls and stumps and other necessary apparatus for the games of boys and girls.

Children from more distant schools were conveyed to the playing fields by tram or 'bus at the Council's expense. The Council's Parks soon swarmed all through the week with active young players, rotas being arranged between the different schools for the use of the grounds and apparatus. At first such games were confined to the afternoon session; but not now. Mr. G. H. Gater, the London County Council Education Officer, tells me that at the present time any teacher of a senior department may include organised games in the morning time-table, and it is estimated that the subject is taken in about seventy per cent. of such departments. Still more room, however, was needed, and the Keepers of the Royal Parks consented to their use on the understanding that the grounds should be properly respected. This condition has been loyally adhered to. At the present time there are 215 football, 290 cricket, 145 netball, and 130 rounders pitches in the Council's Parks and open spaces, the Borough Council's playing sites, and in the Royal Parks.

Apart from these playgrounds, arrangements have been made, by the courtesy of the clubs concerned, for school classes to have the use of pitches on the grounds

of about a dozen amateur cricket clubs, for specified periods during the school week. The M.C.C. kindly arranged for facilities to be provided by which boys from elementary schools were enabled to receive instruction in cricket at the nets at Lord's during the summer evenings. About fifty clubs in and around London offered facilities for net practice to elementary boys, and in thirty-five of these London boys participated.

The movement continued to make way.

Early in 1925 the Duke of York, who, by his active interest in boys' clubs, had specially qualified himself for the position, took the chair at a great gathering held in the Albert Hall, at which the following resolution was carried with acclamation: 'That this meeting, recognising the vital importance of playing fields to the physical, moral, and mental welfare of the youth of the country, deplores the widespread and increasing shortage of recreation grounds, urges all local authorities, sports' governing bodies, societies and members of the public interested in the matter, to co-operate with the National Playing Fields Association in order that by their united efforts the deficiency may be met.' The Duke of York consented to become President of the Association, and the movement, which provides playing fields not only for school children but for those who have learnt to play games at school and wish to continue with them afterwards, has since gone from strength to strength, though much remains to be done.

As stated at the end of a previous chapter, I had

retired from the Inspectorate in 1910, but continued my educational activities as Chairman of the Representative Managers of the L.C.C. Schools. The Rev. Samuel Barnett, the best friend the East End has ever known, had kindly recommended me for the post. He agreed with me that our hands would be greatly strengthened by the addition to our body of the voluntary managers of various denominations. 'But,' he added, 'I doubt if you'll ever bring that about. Anyhow, go easy in the matter.'

When I had been re-elected several times to the chair and felt I had gained the confidence of the Provided School managers, I suggested the incorporation of the Voluntary ones. The general direction of their schools, the appointment of head teachers, and the supervision of the teaching, all came under the personal control of these Voluntary managers. They were also in direct touch with the Board of Education through the Government Inspectors.

The Council school managers, on the other hand, had little say in the appointment of their head teachers, and were under the control of their own Council inspectors, as well as that of the L.C.C. Education Committee. The inclusion of Voluntary managers would bring in a set of men and women with fuller, because more independent, knowledge of educational difficulties. After a struggle a motion in favour of the proposal was carried. But it was necessary also to secure the consent of the L.C.C. and Voluntary Education Committees, and to arrange with them as to the proportion of their representatives upon our

body. All these arrangements we successfully made. The new members vitalised our debates and greatly helped us to carry on our duties during the War. The L.C.C. actually proposed to close us down, no doubt in order to reduce their office work, but we held out against them.

Our Committees and Care-Committees gave much needed assistance to the over-worked teachers, aided widows and orphans, and rehabilitated forsaken mothers and children. They had also constantly to intervene in cases where wives were drinking away their husbands' pay and had in consequence lost all hold upon their school-going children.

I remained chairman until the end of the war, when I was succeeded by Lord Haldane.

CHAPTER XVIII

WAR

Entries in my Diary from August 1914 – Relating to a visit to Ireland and early incidents in the war – Our reception of Belgian refugees at our Harlech and Wimbledon houses – Work as a recruiting officer at Wimbledon – Started 'The Fighting Forces Book Council', to supply the troops with suitable reading, along with Mrs. Gaskell of the Red Cross Library and Hagberg Wright of the London Library – Sir Edward Ward our first chairman. Interview with Lord Carson about creating sympathy for Belgium in Northern and Southern Ireland – My *Contemporary Review* article *re* a 'Home Rule Outside Home Rule' Government of Ireland and its reception – The war work of my sons and daughters.

In July, 1914, I went with Clarissa and Rosaleen on an Irish Literary Society tour in Ireland. Extracts from my diary will give a better impression than a longer account of the topsy-turvydom of the following months and of the wild stories that were current. During the first weeks of war I was also busily engaged on *The Book of Irish Poetry* for the Every Irishman's Library series, of which I was the chief editor.

July 29. Cork. Saw a hundred Irish volunteers with smuggled rifles drilled before Lord Ashbourne and Hyde.

July 30. Bad news. Austria and Servia at war; Russia mobilising.

July 31. Dublin. Interviewed A.E. *re* doing a book for Every Irishman's Library. He showed us a portrait of Plunkett by himself and told us his ideas of artists' pedigrees, *e.g.* Burne-Jones by Sir Joshua out of Corregio by Michael Angelo.

August 1. Stock Exchange closed. Bank rate up to eight per cent., Martial law in Germany, Jaures assassinated, Home Rule Bill postponed. Robbie met us at Harlech at eight p.m. four hours late.

August 3. Startling news. Seven German, three French, and two English ships sunk in North Sea. Balfour joined Cabinet, also Lansdowne.

August 4. War almost certain owing to our promise of support to Belgium and safe-guarding North Coast of France. No truth in North Sea battle or tale of Balfour and Lansdowne joining Cabinet.

August 6. Read war news; announcing Belgian success at Liège, which gives France two days more for mobilising, appointment of Kitchener as War Minister, and destruction of German mine-layer. Question of postman's wife's support on his being called to the colours.

August 7. Two German vessels driven to shelter off Messina, whence they must come out and fight or be disarmed, as Italy is neutral. Belgians have lost two forts, but still hold out. Robbie has written to Old Carthusian Corps as Oxford cannot accept him till he has matriculated.

August 10. Class at School House for ambulance. About fifty present; Charlie (son) and Johnny were bandaged. Spent evening with Charlie (brother) and

Bob (brother) talking over the war situation and showed them Rolleston's letter. 'Germany will have to be bled white, as Bismarck said France would have to be, in order to have the Junker spirit crushed out of her.'

August 12. Up at six a.m. to see Robbie off to join the Royal Welch Fusiliers at Wrexham. He started in good spirits and was waving to us as long as possible from the carriage window. *Goeben* and *Breslau* reached Dardanelles. Will they be honestly interned by Turks or purchased with or without crews to attack Greece?

August 14. A very nice letter from Robbie who likes the Welch Fusiliers and is keen over his work, and hopes to be gazetted in a few days. In evening Clarkes and Frâulein Planck serenaded us from the terrace in French, German and Plantation songs to Dora's guitar accompaniment, and then came in, when the Frâulein gave some humorous German songs, one of which ends 'This is not the time to ask for a match-box holder, we're in the Middle Ages, Father!'

August 19. Meeting in the Castle. Stirring speeches by More and High Sheriff and Kirkby, after an excellent address from Sir Osmond (Williams) whose son has joined his old regiment as a trooper. Very little or no response came to the request for volunteers.

August 20. Dr. Reddie of Abbotsholme came on his bicycle with one of his boys. He had been telegraphed to, to take in four German boys stranded by

war in this country – his own German boys had just got home safe, but he fears his Russians have not.

August 23. Namur forts engaged. Situation generally favourable to allies.

August 25. News of fall of Namur. Wrote Lloyd George asking him to speak out on the subject of the Welsh volunteering.

August 26. Great victory of Russians over Austrians, and in East Prussia.

August 28. Saw Thomas the Plumber *re* Territorials at Harlech. Strangely incredible news of Russian troops passing through England to the front.

August 29. News of naval victory near Heligoland. Wave of loyalty in India at prospect of Indians fighting at our side. Strachey saw Grey and Haldane who were hopeful, saying that the British troops had never put up a better fight against odds. But affairs are critical still.

August 31. Further retirement of Allies in France. Persistent rumours of Russians passing through England. Listened to Mr. Fielding Ould's last lecture at Wernfawr at the end of which More made him a presentation of a silver cup which would have been one of the prizes had the Gold Tournament been held. He referred to Amy's father who had co-operated with English surgeons during the Crimean War. (Her cousin, General Fridhelm von Ranke, had reviewed the Harlech Boy Scouts and communicated a telegram blessing the movement from the Emperor Wilhelm only a year before).

September 2. Met Welshman in train who declared

he had met a captain of a transport who had carried 2,000 Siberians to North Sea.

September 8. Charlie's (brother) letter holds out little hopes of his Cecil's safety. He had seen soldiers of his company in St. Thomas's Hospital and it would appear that, as he had charge of the machine guns he stuck to them at the last and has either been killed or fallen wounded into German hands. Telegram passed by Press Censorship but *not* official saying 250,000 Russians are in France.

September 9. The allies have for the first time taken the offensive and so far with success – 1,000 German prisoners.

September 11. Germans driven over Marne. Capture of 1,500 Germans with guns, maxims, stores – Germans stated to be growing demoralized.

September 12. News of Allies' Victory on the Marne with 6,000 prisoners and 160 guns – evidently the turn of the tide.

September 15. News of surrounding of von Kluck's army and the capture of himself and his staff and 25,000 men.

September 16. German stand on the Aisne. Yesterday's report about von Kluck's capture denied.

September 18. Philip, believing the Turks would get down the wrong side of the fence on which they had been sitting – being fools – wrote rather despondently of his prospects.

September 22. Wimbledon. Preparations to receive two Belgian musicians and their wives (refugees).

Three cruisers sunk in North Sea by German submarines.

September 25. Rolleston said it was 'an open secret' that a French General who had failed the French on the retreat after Mons had been court-martialed and shot. On my return found Amy who had gone to the American Embassy had thus got into touch with her brother Robert (Acting German Consul-General in London at outbreak of war). She brought back a Miss Koopmann, a derelict German girl who had been learning English, for the week-end. This ensured the girl's kind treatment till she is seen off to Germany early on Sunday.

October 1. Letter from Robbie, still looking after prisoners and recruits at Lancaster.

October 7. Telegram from Charlie (brother) 'Reason to believe Cecil a prisoner and safe.' Six Belgians offered for to-morrow by telegram.

October 8. Saw Charlie (brother). Greatly bucked up by news of Cecil gained by his having sent a cheque to Cox's Bank via Rotterdam. The handwriting was C's and cheque was dated September 24.

October 9. French breakfast with Belgians. In the evening the two Belgian men quarrelled on the subject of what would happen to the Germans after the war, the hotel-keeper declaring they would be wiped out altogether.

October 13. Had interesting talk with Susie (Majolier) and her girls *re* state of feeling in S. of France. Fifteenth Army Corps which ran was afterwards put in front after some N.C.O.'s had been shot.

October 19. Wrote to Robbie and took in his 'Spoilt Salute' to be typed.

October 20. Robbie turned up at tea-time looking very flourishing and fatter. He goes back to Wrexham in the first instance and probably will not go to the front for some time.

October 24. Konrad has not been heard of from the (German) front. This from Clara (von Faber du Faur, in Switzerland) but that no Rankes had fallen.

November 2. Called on Mr. May and agreed with him that the persecution of naturalized Germans by golf and other clubs was petty and vindictive.

November 5. Report, which seems too true, of the loss of the *Monmouth* off the coast of Chile. If it is confirmed, it will mean the death of John Cooper my beloved brother-in-law. (It did).

November 8. Went to Westminster Abbey and heard an excellent sermon from Canon Carnegie. He spoke of Russia as the most religious of all the combatants and hopes much from a closer relationship between the Russian and Anglican Churches.

November 10. Saw Schofield *re* Kinema. Cold light films are the nearest approach to safety ones, but till non-inflammable ones are perfected, he thinks we cannot go far forward.

November 15. Interesting talk from Mr. Duffield who knew Egypt well. Told us of caretaker of one of the Royal Tombs who was found studying a German grammar in preparation of the time when the Kaiser would be Overlord of Egypt.

November 25. Lunched Augustine Birrell at

Athenæum. He said that Kitchener thought he knew Ireland 'because he was dropped as a puppy in Kerry' – it was useless to try to get at him.

December 3. Germans make no headway at Ypres.

December 4. Letter from Welsh builder who says motor-house is in a most dilapidated state 'as if all the lambs and rams of the world had been jumping on it together.'

December 7. Amy returned from Wrexham at 2.30. Though the weather had been miserable and she was disappointed with the Church service at which she was the one woman among 600 men, she was pleased at the people with whom Robbie was billeted. He does not care for his present companions, rather horsey young Welsh Squireens.

December 20. American opinion hard set v. Germany owing to bombarding of Whitby, Scarborough and the Hartlepools. Mrs. Swayne's house at Scarborough had a miraculous escape, houses on both sides of it having been shattered. Called on Marie Brema who in the most friendly way agreed to sing and recite on January 16. (Belgian-Irish Charity Concert).

In the autumn of 1914, when refugee Belgians had to be accommodated in England, we, like many others, gave up our house at Harlech for their reception. When we went there for the Easter holidays, several of them stayed on as our guests, among them Count Max de Maulde, an injured airman, and a flautist from the Royal Orchestra in Antwerp with his wife. On our return to London fresh pressure arose, and we there welcomed another party, including an attractive

little boy and an old woman who after a few days of quiet and comfort said to Amy, '*Vous m'avez sauvé la vie!*' Another of our guests, a ship's steward, wrote gratefully to us from a foreign port when the war was over.

A further claim on our hospitality was made by the War Office who billeted half a dozen soldiers on us. These behaved extremely well during their short training at the camp on Wimbledon Common.

As my age prevented me from volunteering in the War, I acted for a time as a recruiting officer in Wimbledon. I felt I might also be useful in the supplying of good reading to soldiers and sailors, and made enquiries as to what was being done in this direction. Mr. Balfour, with whom I talked the matter over, told me that the Fleet was well supplied with books, as every war vessel had its own library. But I found that the same care was not being taken to supply the reading wants of our soldiers. In this direction two sets of workers were engaged. Sir Edward Ward, Permanent Secretary to the War Office, assisted by the Hon. Mrs. Anstruther, was running a War Library for the Front in Pimlico with little regard to the quality of the books that were being sent out. They seemed to think that the men only needed the distraction of sensational literature, and were, therefore, not particular about the quality of the books. But I found that Mrs. Gaskell, who ran the Red Cross Library at Marble Arch, thought otherwise, as did Hagberg Wright, the Secretary of the London Library, with whom she had come into touch.

I felt that joint action should be taken by the two War Libraries already started, and that public support should be aroused, to enable us to make the best possible selection of books. Hagberg Wright concurred and got leave from his committee to lend us a room in the London Library for a representative meeting on the question. I then wrote to invite co-operation from leaders of thought throughout the country, as well as from prominent trust-holders, publishers, and librarians. Favourable replies were received from the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, Cardinal Bourne, the Rev. F. B. Meyer, and from such men and women of letters as Sir Henry Newbolt and Mrs. Humphrey Ward. The Educational Trusts, the English, Welsh and Scottish Boards of Education; Libraries, Publishers, and Dominion Governments, all were in hearty agreement with the scheme and ready to help it in every way. Lord Bryce's reply contained this passage: 'You are entirely right in thinking that something better in the way of reading for soldiers is wanted than old magazines and second-rate fiction. It is the part of wisdom to draw good out of evil, even such an overwhelming evil as this.'

After some hesitation on the part of Sir Edward Ward and the Hon. Mrs. Anstruther, the amalgamation of the Camps' and the Red Cross Libraries was effected. The committee first met at the London Library, but afterwards moved to Scotland House, just above Scotland Yard, Westminster. Sir Edward Ward agreed to take the chair, and the joint movement

was christened the Fighting Forces Book Council. The Council did a great deal of active work during the rest of the War years. The book-selection committee was made up of Hagberg Wright, William Meredith, and myself. Mr. Meredith represented the body of publishers who not only supplied us with their book lists, but made us handsome gifts out of their stocks. Amongst private donors the most munificent was Sir Israel Gollancz of King's College who presented us with no less than 5,000 volumes of the King's Classics.

On one occasion, at the invitation of Miss Beatrice Harradan, the author of *Ships that pass in the night*, I visited the Endell Street Military Hospital, which was entirely run by women, and there picked up many useful hints from Miss Harradan, and her fellow-librarian, Miss Elizabeth Robins, the actress-novelist. Their patients belonged to English, Scottish, Australian and New Zealand regiments, and they found a great variety of tastes amongst them. At first the men were very shy of selecting books from the library shelves, but when the two ladies got to know them better, they learnt how to meet the tastes of most of them. 'How about the others?' I asked. 'Well, we took a good look at them, and "baited their beds" with the books we thought likely to suit them – and we were generally right.'

The difference between the reading matter preferred by say Scottish, New Zealand, and English soldiers was remarkable. The English could not do without their *Johnny Bull* as they called Mr. Bottomley's paper

or Nat Gould stories. The love of New Zealanders for good literature was patent. The Scots even went in for metaphysics, and one actually asked for an Encyclopædia, which was promptly supplied.

During the war the F.F.B.C. sent out thousands upon thousands of books to every front, and most appreciative were the letters we received in acknowledgment.

* * * *

I had been anxiously turning over in my mind the Irish Home Rule situation, and had hit on a possible solution. Why should not the whole of Ulster be administered by a separate Home Rule Government wherein the non-Nationalists would have the preponderance to which their numbers entitled them? Not only would the inclusion of the Catholic and largely Catholic counties be a set off against the governing by the Dublin Parliament of an equally large body of Protestants; it would also have two advantages to console them for being sundered from their brethren. To retain them in Ulster would secure a strong Nationalist representation there, and it might later lead Ulster to decide in favour of a common Government of all Ireland, if satisfied with the treatment of the Protestants in the South. Till then the inter-Governmental relations of the two Home Rule bodies would have to be regulated by a Federal Council to deal with financial and other matters of common import. Such a Council would act like the right-minded lawyers of a separated but not divorced couple, so guarding their interests and those of their children

that if they saw the advantage of a *rapprochement* between them later on, when mutual resentment had softened under the influence of time and maturer judgment, they might bring it about.

This scheme, in detail, appeared in a general article of mine on the Irish question in the *Contemporary Review*. Its principles had been embodied in a letter to *The Times*, early in 1917, and it attracted the interested attention of Lord Northcliffe, Mr. Balfour, Ronald McNeill and James Craig amongst Ulster leaders, and of Redmond and Devlin amongst Home Rulers. Scott spoke well of it in the *Manchester Guardian*, and Garvin in the *Observer*. It was shown by Lloyd George to Asquith, the Prime Minister, who described it as 'an ingenious and excellent suggestion.' For various reasons it was not acted upon at the time, but neither was Lord McDonnell's plan of 'Home Rule inside Home Rule,' upon which he conferred with me, nor another propounded by George Russell. In a long letter to me about it he wrote, 'Your memorandum does suggest a way out, but it would accentuate the distinction between Ulster and the rest of Ireland, which wants Ulster brains very badly and will not be efficient without Ulster aid.'

Yet what has happened since? So far as Ulster goes my scheme has been largely adopted and is being realized more fully by the closer co-operation of the Protestant and Catholic members of Parliament. The rest of Ireland has a Dominion Government with no representation in our House of Commons. We have, therefore, the anomaly of two Parliaments controlling

the smaller British Isle, whilst the larger is satisfied with one. Both Irish Governments are ruling well. Is it too much, therefore, to hope that such a co-ordination of the two as my 'Home Rule Outside Home Rule' adumbrated may be realised in the near future and ultimately lead to a central All-Ireland Parliament sitting by turns in Dublin and Belfast?

I called on Sir Edward Carson, as he then was, at his London house on March 15, 1915.

I told him I wanted his help in promoting the aims of a non-party association formed to induce Irish people of all creeds and opinions fully to realise the European situation, and as a consequence to help England and the Allies generally in a whole-hearted way.

Our propaganda was to be conducted by means of lectures by M. Cammaerts and Bishop de Waechter in Dublin, Belfast and elsewhere. I told him what was the proposed constitution of our council; Lord Bryce as president, Dr. Mahaffy, Sir Horace Plunkett, who had accepted, Lord Monteagle, Sir Thomas Esmonde, and others. 'But,' he interposed, 'all these are Home Rulers.' 'Surely not Mahaffy,' I said. 'I should call him one,' he replied. 'Bryce is all right, owing to his quasi-official position, but not very convincing; and you don't know where you have got Plunkett.' He approved of Esmonde. I asked him whom he would propose as Unionist members of the council, and he replied, 'John Jameson, Governor of the Bank of Ireland,' and accepted my suggestion of Lord Iveagh. He was rather against M.P.'s being on

the Council, and therefore rejected his colleague Campbell's name, but advised me to write to him or see him about Dublin Unionists likely to be of help, as he was much more in touch with Dublin now than himself.

I told Sir Edward that the Belgian Refugees Relief Committee in Dublin had been organised by the Irish Government Local Board, and after being entirely Protestant in character now had an equal number of Roman Catholics as members, and that Lady Maloney, its Hon. Secretary, was a competent woman who had compelled belief in the German brutalities in Belgium by sending Belgian sufferers into districts where these atrocities had hitherto been discredited, thus gaining the support of the Bishop of Galway for the Belgian cause.

Sir Edward here said that he fully advised a campaign by Belgian clerics in all parts of Ireland except those parts of Ulster which might regard the campaign as Catholic propaganda. He was most anxious, however, that a good meeting should be arranged in Belfast, but if it was to be run from Dublin, the Dublin secretary and committee should be in proper touch with Belfast feeling. If Mr. Murphy, Belgian Consul in Dublin, who was the owner of the *Independent* newspaper and Chairman of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, were secretary, no better medium of communication could be found.

The best plan would be for the Mayor of Belfast Mr. MacCullagh, a liberal minded man, to call a town's meeting, but not to ask him or Mr. Devlin to

appear on the platform as representing their political parties. Dr. Crozier, Protestant Archbishop of Armagh, was a man of broad views, and might be asked to be present. Cardinal Logue would no doubt support the Belgian cause if Bishop de Waechter spoke.

Belfast Unionists had already subscribed £7,000 to the Belgian Relief Fund. He himself had been loudly applauded when he said in one of his speeches in Belfast at the beginning of the war, 'God bless little Belgium for what she has done for us.' But MacCullagh would know whom to invite, and if I wrote him a letter, saying what we proposed to do, he would forward it with a letter of his own to the Lord Mayor, and discover whether a meeting to be addressed by Belgians might be wisely held or no. He inclined to think, however, that it might very well take place.

I then discussed the question of recruiting in Ireland with Sir Edward; for it was clear that successful pro-Belgian lectures should have the effect of stimulating the recruiting movement there. I informed him that Sir Lawrence Parsons was raising the new Irish army, and that I had heard from his wife, a cousin of mine, that he had experienced great difficulties in getting recruits from the farming classes, not only outside Ulster, but also in the agricultural districts of that province. Sir Edward replied that this exactly tallied with his own Ulster experiences, for many Ulster farms were now entirely worked by the farmers and their sons; labourers were few and far between, and many of the farms would become derelict if the young farmers went to the front—hence the reluctance

of their parents to part with them. The Belfast artisans had volunteered splendidly – Belfast stood at the top of the list in the proportion of volunteers to its population. Indeed when he was last speaking in Belfast he found the Belfast men rather too willing to recruit, and had to warn them that there were even more wanted in the shipbuilding yards and in some of the factories than in the field. Belfast had built or was engaged in building five new warships.

He added that the report I had passed on to him that Kitchener had pooh-poohed the Ulster volunteers, declaring that after all their so-called home training they would not be fit for the front for months and had to be put at the back of the other volunteers, was an impudent fabrication. He went so far as to say that Kitchener had been greatly impressed by the thoroughness of the training of every unit of the Ulster volunteers. As a rule the Belfast men were most democratic in their readiness to serve shoulder to shoulder in the ranks, no matter what their social position; but there were some exceptions – corps of clerks and warehousemen and others who had formed class companies much like some of the English new army battalions. He spoke about a speech recently delivered by John Dillon in Belfast in which the Nationalist had said that if the Irish Catholics in the North would only come forward in large numbers and learn to be soldiers they would no doubt be able to drub the Ulster Volunteers handsomely when the war was over. I did not retort that General Richardson, when the war begun, had spoken as injudiciously about what Protestant Ulster

would do to resist Home Rule if it were forced upon them when the war was over!

Sir Edward agreed with the member for Louth that it had been a great misfortune that the Volunteers had not been supplied with rifles after Redmond's great speech when war was proclaimed – supposing the rifles to have been available, which however seemed doubtful. The gun-running in Ulster had been an immense stimulus to the Ulster Volunteer movement, and thereby to war recruiting, by familiarising people with the possession of arms; had the Southern Volunteers been able to get guns in the same way it would have made them respond much more readily to Redmond's appeal that they should volunteer for the war. It should be remembered that at that time when some American rifles were smuggled into the South of Ireland, Sir Edward made no fuss, thinking it was only fair play for the South of Ireland Volunteers to have equal chances with his own Ulster supporters, I suppose.

According to Sir Edward, some of the Nationalist papers, not knowing the Irish temper, had threatened or suggested conscription if their people did not volunteer, and so drove some to emigrate. As I pointed out to Sir Edward (and he endorsed my recollection), at the time of the American Civil War, the Irish volunteered in multitudes for the North, as indeed they did for the South; but when the draft, the American term for conscription, came in, they refused to be compelled to fight – and when the draft was removed, came on again in large numbers. The Irish

Nationalist papers had shown a lamentable inability to profit from recent historical experience.

The laxity of the Government as compared with the activity of the Sein-Fein minority, perhaps subsidized by Germany, had helped to damp down ardour roused by Redmond's speech and the recruiting movement in Ireland, east, west and south had lost momentum. Again Sir Edward had found the same difficulties in getting the War Office to allow Ulster Irishmen in the North of England – Sunderland, Newcastle, etc. to join Irish units of the Ulster Regiments as Crilly had experienced in connection with the propaganda of the National League of Great Britain. Several hundred men had been recruited by the Ulster agents, but these were not allowed to serve except with English territorial regiments. Of course the case of Irish Catholic recruits in Northumberland and Durham, and elsewhere, was a much more aggravating one. The Irish proprietor or co-proprietor of the *Newcastle Chronicle* had raised an Irish brigade of some 4,000 men with the intention of its being kept together as a part of an Irish army, but the War Office in the first instance refused to admit this, and later on, when 1,000 more men were recruited with the same hope, that hope was again disappointed, and the Irish force thus raised was absorbed in the Northumberland Fusiliers and similar corps. It seemed as if the Government or the War Office or both distrusted the loyalty of these proposed Irish regiments.

Perhaps, too, it was thought, now that Home Rule was assured in one form or another, that a better

opportunity for Irishmen and Englishmen to fight side by side as brothers-in-arms, had arrived. But, however that might be, Sir Edward clearly thought that the War Office or Government had made a great mistake, and that Irish divisions would fight better as such.

Lastly I discussed with Sir Edward the scheme which I had conceived about a year since by which Ulster might have a Home Rule Government of its own outside that of the rest of Ireland, rather than be excluded from any share in Home Rule and remain a province of Great Britain. I called this scheme of mine 'Home Rule Outside Home Rule,' as opposed to Sir Horace Plunkett's scheme, 'Home Rule Inside Home Rule,' if that was to mean the dominance of Ulster and the Irish Protestants of the rest of Ireland by Catholic Nationalists; for they were very loth to cease being an integral part of Ireland, to which in their own way, they are, and always have been intensely devoted. Indeed, Irish Protestants, and before them the Irish Chiefs of the North, whose blood runs strongly in many Ulster Irishmen who are now Loyalists, have led the way to anti-English movements. The United Irishmen, the Irish Volunteers, men of the type of Wolfe Tone, Mitchell and James Orr were Ulstermen with republican tendencies; and it is a remarkable fact that the Northern Irishmen driven out of Ulster by the oppression of the English Laws were the determining factor in favour of American Republicanism. My scheme of Home Rule outside Home Rule would respect what remained in Ulster of this democratic feeling. It would give proportional

representation in the Northern Government to Roman Catholics, to be secured by electoral redistribution throughout Ulster, and this would give the Protestants the proportion of eleven to eight, which their population demanded.

Sir Edward said at once, 'This is to me an absolutely new idea and proposition. Asquith sent me a scheme for the separate treatment of Ulster which might slide into the Home Rule scheme for the rest of Ireland at the end of six years exclusion. But this is a different idea, and may be worth entertaining later on. Meanwhile it would be useless to discuss it publicly, but there is no reason why it should not be ventilated privately in the right quarters.'

He seemed to think that if the preponderance of eleven to eight that the Ulster Protestants had in population were made the basis of this proportionate election – the Catholics assisting in the Government of Ulster as a Home Rule province – six years might see a fusion between the two Home Rule Governments of Ireland, or in the case of the financial breakdown of the Home Rule system, a reversion to the Union. He was evidently interested to hear that I had found Irishmen of very various views inclined to consider my scheme, said he knew about my position as an intermediary in Irish affairs of a non-contentious character, and felt with me that Ireland had been settling down quietly under Unionism after the passing of the Land Act and other remedial measures, such as the Irish National University Act, in which he had himself concurred, and that the second Home Rule agitation

was factitious, or largely so. Ireland, he agreed, would have maintained local patriotism without Home Rule, as Protestants and Catholics were drawing together in literary and archæological and musical societies, and the Ulster Protestants, many of whom had Irish patriotic traditions, would have become as interested in them historically as the Nationalists. This *rapprochement* had been damped down and set back. Indeed the revival of Protestantism had gone so far that some of the Ulster Irishmen did not see why we should be fighting against Germany, which was a Protestant Power. He had then to show them that, far from this being really the case, Germany, though nominally a Protestant nation, was one-third Catholic while Great Britain and Ireland taken together were one-tenth Catholic. He had therefore a double difficulty in persuading his people to enlist when the Home Rule Act was put on the Statute Book without the promised Amending Act. Yet they had enlisted to such an extent in Belfast that recruiting had run dry. Redmond, he said, had refused to meet him to discuss details of the Home Rule Bill, probably under pressure from stronger men in his party, such as Dillon and Devlin. He regarded O'Brien as honest, and had friendly relations with him. O'Brien had refused to repudiate the understanding reached with the Irish landlords as the result of their round table conference between the Unionists and Nationalists. Dillon was out of Ireland at the time of this conference, but on his return used all his influence against it.

Sir Edward had never met Devlin. He seemed

impressed by my suggestion that if a Home Rule outside Home Rule scheme were carried, Devlin would not be cut off from Ulster, whose exclusion from Home Rule he had so bitterly contested, but would be, at any rate, the Opposition leader there. Devlin's confession to Sir Lawrence Parsons, of which his daughter informed me, that until the present crisis he had not realised the influence the Irish upper classes possessed, seemed to interest him much. He agreed that he might modify as much as O'Brien had done, as he was still a young man. Of his ambition he had no sort of doubt.

He handsomely acknowledged his energy as a recruiter, and was interested to hear what Sir Lawrence Parsons had said of his judgment in getting up a separate unit of farmers who were too haughty to serve side by side with their serving boys.

All my ten children helped directly or indirectly in the Great War, and all survived it. But my brothers and sisters suffered cruelly, and five of my nine nephews fell.

Of my daughters, three did hospital work, and the fourth taught in a boys' school where she replaced a master who had joined up. Of my sons, Philip served with distinction in Egypt and Palestine, Richard tried to join the army, but was not allowed to give up his semi-military appointment in Egypt, and Perceval joined up in Canada, but was invalided out. He re-enlisted twice in England, but the old trouble recurred, and he was finally discharged. He served in Government offices for the remainder of the war. Robert's war doings will be found in the following chapter.

Charles, after a course of training at Oxford, received his commission in the Royal Irish, our old family regiment, but the ending of the war prevented him from seeing active service. John got no further than the Charterhouse O.T.C., and celebrated Armistice Day by digging potatoes on the school allotment.

CHAPTER XIX

ROBERT GRAVES

Childhood – Early rhymes – Letters from the front – What the troops sang – Robert's wound.

As my fourth son Robert has lately been much before the public with his poetry, prose criticism, *Lawrence and the Arabs* and chiefly with *Goodbye to All That*, an autobiography written at the age of thirty-three, it is possible that some readers will want to hear more of him. In writing of him I must point out that there is much in his autobiography that I do not accept as accurate. For the change in his outlook I hold the war and recent experiences responsible. To these I impute his bitter and hasty criticism of people who never wished him harm. He was a shy, affectionate, studious child and showed a taste for music and singing when very young. His chief friend for many years was his sister Rosaleen who was nearest him in age and shared his interests. He had abundant courage even as a child. When he was only four he caught scarlet fever, just after the birth of his younger brother, and had to be sent off to hospital by himself in an ambulance. The moment he understood why he had to go he was extraordinarily brave and went off without a complaint or whimper.

In 1908, when Robert was twelve, he failed to get a scholarship for Winchester. Amy, who had taken him up for the Examination, asked Dr. Montagu Rendall, the Headmaster, to recommend her a good Preparatory School from which to try next year. He suggested Copthorne, a school with an excellent scholarship record and of which his brother Bernard was Headmaster. We acted on this advice, and Bernard Rendall, though reluctant to take a boy of Robert's age, generously accepted him. At Copthorne he spent his happiest school year. When the summer of 1909 came on, we asked Rendall if he could guarantee that Robert would secure a Winchester scholarship. With so large a family to educate, it was most important that his schooling should cost us as little as might be. It was really an unfair question, and Rendall could only answer that though he hoped Robert would do well, no one could guarantee a scholarship at Winchester where the competition is so keen. We were afraid to take the risk and sent him in for Charterhouse where he took first place. It seems probable, therefore, that he would have succeeded at Winchester, in spite of ἵστημι and ἵημι which Robert himself blames for this change of plans.

During his first year or two at Charterhouse, Robert collaborated with Rosaleen in a set of nonsense verses which they called 'Alpha Beta Pie.' The literary advisers of two leading publishing firms recommended this collection, but in each case the business heads turned it down. Here are specimens.

THE HUSHU BIRD

The Hushu bird dejected stood
Upon one leg;
He was too old and weak to dig,
Too proud to beg.
And when a motor-car came by
With dust and rush,
He gently raised one skinny paw
And murmured 'Hush!'
Alas! Alas! The Hushu bird
Is now no more.
There lies a little lonely grave
Upon the shore.

THE MONTROSE QUAGGA

A quick-footed Quagga from Merry Montrose
Ran a race with a Rhino and won by a nose.
The Rhino sat down with a bellow of grief
And thus to his feelings gave angry relief.
'You coward! I notice you've sharpened your snout
To twice its true length!' Quoth the Quagga: 'Get out!
Such false imputations I utterly scorn.
Why! You've added an elephant's tusk to your horn!
If I had suspected such felony base,
I wouldn't have troubled to enter the race.'
But the Rhino returned in low tones of remorse:
'As a fact the tusk loosened half way through the course,

And, but for this little mischance, I declare
I'd have easily walked in the winner. So there!'
'I see,' said the Quagga, 'and pray, may I ask
What sort of adhesive you used for the task?'
'Gregg's Gum,' sighed the Rhino. 'Well, if I were you
For sticking on horns I'd try Jellaby's Glue!'

ZACHAEUS ZERITES

Zachaeus Zerites, tight lashed to a mast,
On a bare desert island was cruelly cast.

But he found a pork-pie-plant and gingerbread tree,
And a strong pair of clogs was swept in from the sea.

Some studs and some collars he luckily found
And some trousers, well creased, he dug up from the ground.

He discovered a house, which had drifted from Rome,
And, pleased with its beauty, he made it his home.

He married a Duchess, washed up by the sea,
And there lived as happy, as happy could be.

When we knew Robert was really unhappy at Charterhouse, he had already reached an age at which no other school would have taken him. The alternative was to bring him up at home under tutors, a plan from which I had myself suffered in my boyhood. We, therefore, urged him to be patient, and were glad

to allow him the boxing-lessons which enabled him to hold his own.

Robert first went out to France in May, 1915, and I give extracts from his letters home during the next four months. These appeared in the *Spectator* of September 11th, 1915.

'On Sunday the whatever-the-date was, I was in charge of a hundred or so ——s doing fatigue work down at the quay in the immense storehouse, built by certain busy Teutons. It is over half a mile long, a third of that broad, and choked up to the rafters with stuff (know that picture of "Little Porgie" in Just-So Stories? this place knocks that into a cocked hat) – well, I was down there and got a sudden order to return and report, which I did, and next morning a great column of us marched to the station and entrained. We took twenty-five hours to go about as many miles, travelling, the five of us Flash Mob, in one carriage with packs and valises, which was cheery, but not good for sleeping. We had a rowdy dinner beforehand, with *homards*, *pain d'épice*, bully beef which isn't bad stuff – for a time – marmalade, tinned sausages, sang a lot of songs, and did the "To-morrow comrades we" touch. When we arrived at the railhead, a small town (ask no names), we disembarked feeling a bit like the bottom of the proverbial parrot-cage, and were told by the guide who met us that we were to go straight to the trenches. Which we did after a five-mile march by cobbled road and a mile and a half down a muddy communication trench in the dark, lit by occasional star shells. I was posted to – Company

and put in charge of No. – platoon. After a cup of tea, some cake, and an Egyptian, I retired to——'s dug-out, where I slept like a top (broken only by the "stand-to" for an hour before dawn). The trenches are palaces, dug by the French who had occupied 'em for six months, wonderful places. I wish home was as tidy always. Clay walls, bomb-proof ceilings, pictures on the walls, straw-filled berths, stoves, tables, chairs, complete with a piebald cat. I wasn't frightened by the guns which bang away all day and night. The noise is just like the Blaenau Festiniog slate-blasters, with the rocket-like whistle of the shells going over.'

'I have a servant called——. He is a good servant but a bad man. The worse the man, in fact, the better the servant. What constitutes the good servant is the faculty of coming back with more than he sets out with: mine got hold of a new Webley revolver complete with lanyard, an excellent weapon. Some poor beggar must have cursed, but I couldn't trace ownership, so remain the possessor. No more news except that the tomatoed-sardines are good eating and I must be at 'em.'

As he reflects that he still has only one star on his sleeve, he quotes from the *Hangar Herald*, a journal published at the front by the A.S.C.: –

'Oh, deem it pride, not lack of skill
That thus forbids my sleeve's increase,
The morning and the evening still
Have but one star apiece.'

'Except for our spells in the trenches we are nearly always more or less in civilisation: here, for instance, in my billet there is a very nice French bourgeois family, the – –'s. To-day I have distinguished myself by writing out for the girl, who is in about the under-fifth of the local High School, an essay on the theory of Decimal Division. Now you didn't think I was as clever as all that, did you? It was of course a combined feat in French and Maths. Her question paper was full of abbreviations, which she explained as due to the quick rate at which her lady professor talked. I asked the reason of this. "Oh, because they were *beaucoup pressées*." But why *pressées?* "Oh, because every few minutes a shell burst quite near and the *professeur* had to take shelter in the cellar." '

'*Erewhon* is a delightful book to read in the trenches on a hot afternoon when nothing much is doing; this is the sixth time I have tackled it, and there is always some new reading to be got out of Butler's twisted accounts of Erewhonian customs. Many thanks also for Keats, who is about the most soothing poet going. I have the Odyssey here too; that is my Scots blood coming out. Only a Scotsman would take his classics out to the front.'

As a matter of fact, Robert is only one-eighth or one-sixteenth Scottish, and he may not have known that Wolfe, who was of Irish descent, wrote down certain lines from the Iliad just before his attack on Quebec. In another letter he speaks of hiding his taste in books from all but the most tolerant authorities, but records his pleasure at discovering traces of

a kindred spirit in the trenches. On the back of an envelope he found the following list of things to be bought: – 'Bootlaces; Pocket lamp refit; Acid-drops; Chaucer; à Kempis; Keats.'

'Talking of dug-outs, a curious thing happened the other day. There were seven men in a dug-out and so tightly packed that when they go to sleep and the N.C.O. in charge wants to turn over on his other side he gives the word "Dug-out, on the other side, turn!" Into this dug-out came a sixty-pounder shell during tea; for some whim of its own it did not explode, but crushed one man into unrecognizability, and the others began grousing that they had spilt half their tea: this is true.

'We go back to-morrow into some rather sensational trenches, but I hope not for long: the first excitement of the baptism of fire soon wears off, and the joys of sniping fat Germans, though sweet, are seldom long-lived. There is a ripple of machine-gun fire to and fro like a garden spray and the snippy sniper gets snapped. You can't imagine how dull everything is here: nothing but a perpetual field day, mostly aimless pottering. . . . And when we leave the trenches and go back to billets there is always cursing at people who put their marmalade knife from the sardines into the ration jam. They have been dropping long-range shells quite near us in the big town where I am billeted and bag a few civilians every day, but, really, nobody troubles to cross the road to avoid them. London will be equally nonchalant after a short Zepp. course, I hope.

'About your advice about staving off approaching

senility – of course I always make for the nursery whenever I go into billets, and the French children and I get on splendidly: I do their homework for them. But even this relaxation cannot alter the fact that I am for fifty men, many of them old enough to be my father, a sort of combined schoolmaster, doctor, parson, foreman, general lawyer, official newsagent, and tyrant, with genuinely despotic powers when we are in the trenches: and this is rather a strain on my youth. . . .

'I can't stick those horrid fellows who write home to say war is adorable. Let me explain what I mean. Last night – we had seventeen casualties yesterday from bombs and grenades – I went round the fire-trench, which averages fifteen yards from the Germans' and at one point is only ten yards off, to see if all was correct, and turning a traverse sharply almost stepped on a Horrible Thing lying in the parados. We can afford to laugh at corpses, if we did not know them when alive, because with them it is a case of what the men call "nappoo fineesh": we can joke with men badly wounded who are going to recover: but when a German bullet – and a reversed one at that – strikes a man on the head and takes the scalp and a lot of his brains clean away, and still lets him live for two hours, the joke is there no more. An R.E. sergeant met me there and told me that his sap had just come through into an old crater where a mine had been exploded, and that the time was ripe for bomb-throwers. So with this Horrid Thing still lying there the bombers filed past, and creeping down the sap lobbed the

bombs over into the German trenches: they threw twenty over, and now doubtless the Prussian subaltern opposite, if he is a decent fellow, is being sickened by more than one Horrid Thing in his parados.'

'These fellows are great singers and I have heard a lot of weird war chants already. One runs to the tune of "The Milky Cocoanut," which you may know:–

"Coo-oo-oolness under fire,
Coo-oo-oolness under fire,
Mentioned in despatches for
Drinking the Company rum,
Coo-oolness under fire!"

'. . . The men sing:–

"I shoved my finger in a woodpecker's hole
And the woodpecker screamed GOD STRAFE YOUR SOUL
Take it out!
Take it out!
Take it out!
REMOVE IT!"

'I think I told you before of the little *chanson du cœur* "I want to go home." No, I think it was some one else I told, so you must have it:–

"I want to go home: (bis)
The coal box and shrapnel they whistle and roar,
I dont want to go to the trenches no more.
I want to go over the sea,
Where the Kaiser can't throw bombs at me.

P o o o o o h! aye!
I don't want to die,
I want to go home."

'There are dozens of topical verses all composed by the machine-gun section . . . There is another song called "Ee-aye-ee-aye-oh," really one of those cumulative farmyard songs, but these Welshmen sing other verses besides to it. They have: –

"Now old Von Kluck he had a lot of men,
Ee-aye-ee-aye-oh!
And every man he had a little gun,
Ee-aye-ee-aye-oh!
With a 'ping-ping' here,
And a 'ping-ping' there,
And here a 'ping' and there a 'ping', 'ping-pinging' everywhere,
It's old Von Kluck he had a lot of men,
Ee-aye-ee-aye-oh!"

'On the march, amid other weird and wonderful songs, they have a habit of breaking out with:–

"Three cheers for the Vaterland!
Ock, ock, ock!
Mein Gott!"

which is to them the very acme of waggishness. They are a funny lot.

'There are still a few reservists (like the little postman) left in this batt., who were called out shortly after mobilization in accordance with their agreement to serve five years with the colours and seven with the reserve, and so when we have a bit of a bad time and

the men begin to "crib" and "chew the fat" (*Anglicé* to grumble) you sometimes hear a fellow who was called up in the last month on which he was liable call out "Heigho! my backshee seven!" backshee meaning anything which you give for no return. There is a catchword much used by those who have been ragged by their pals and want to show that they can't be treated so lightly. They say, "Out of my way, strafe you all. I'm Basham," or simply "Strafe you, I'm Basham." Their language is very interesting, and it's useful to know what they mean by words like cushy, blighty, charpawnee, pozzy, rotey, to quote only the commonest ones . . . —— is a great singer: he comes from the hills and is not taken seriously by his comrades in consequence. When surprised he has a way of exclaiming in an absolutely inimitable way, "Well, I go to Swanséa!" and you can tell when he is pleased because then he is sure to sing his little Welsh carol about a Mrs. Jones who sold black lotion – the tune has been borrowed from one of our most famous songs beginning:–

> "We're all going home on furlough,
> I don't think, I don't think." '

In one place, unperturbed by reverses at the front, he complains of bad news being unnecessarily sent to him by 'unimaginative idiots' from home. 'Happiness out here depends ever so much more on what is happening at home than on the immediate situation in which you find yourself.' 'We do a great deal of gambling at penny nap and *vingt-et-un* at odd moments,

alternating with sniping, and you might be surprised to hear little ——, one of the dearest, mildest, nicest creatures I know, say over a dull hand, "I got two of them this morning in the trench opposite sap Z," and get only a polite "Oh?" in answer.

'I forgot to record a very quaint thing that happened at a brigade concert held at —— the day K. of K. came down to see us. Our divisional commander came in to honour the occasion, and after a thumping good programme of Welsh, English, and Irish talent, got up on the platform, and made a little speech. He said how pleased K. had been that day with our soldierly appearance (what, what!) and our cheerfulness and good discipline under arms . . . and that he had promised the great man that the —— Division would see the campaign through to the bitter end. Loud cheers. Then an excited Irish private rushed up, and shaking the old general cordially by the hand burst out: "Be Jasus surr yire right. The old —— Division will stick it to the bitter end, and ye're the boy to lead us to victhry and everlasting fame." The general, very alarmed: "Ah, yes, yes, quite so, quite so, my man. Of course, yes." His staff had dived off into the surrounding trees to smother their shouts of mirth, and the last I saw of the two, they were shaking hands like old friends reunited after many years – the General very frightened – and the military police just diving on the Irishman from behind.

'Y is a great character: I have never known a man more sparing of his words or a better listener. But he's not a wet blanket; he's too good a sort, and a

silent humorist of the first water. When he first went home on leave in December he is reported to have been seen in Piccadilly wearing a British warm coat, with no badges of rank, over his uniform, goose-stepping down the pavement and giving an exaggerated salute to all officers and winking at all the Tommies and N.C.O.'s he met. This was a reaction against regimentation, and pleased him highly. He did little else on his five days.'

On July 24th, 1916, Robert's twenty-first birthday, Amy had a letter from him written in pencil saying that he had been wounded on the 20th, but was on his way to the base in a hospital train. His handwriting was normal, so we were not unduly anxious. Next day I failed to get any information at the War Office. In my absence three letters had arrived for Amy, one being from Robert which she opened first. His news was encouraging, as he was sleeping better and there was little hæmorrhage as a result of his chest wound. A shell splinter had passed clean through his right lung without turning, and he had minor wounds as well. There was also a letter from the matron of No. 8 Hospital at Rouen, to say that his state was serious, but that everything possible was being done for him. The third letter was from Robert's C.O. announcing that he had been badly hit and had died, he believed on the way to hospital. The letter concluded with the usual words of praise and condolence. There was nothing to tell us which letter had been written first, and we feared that Robert had collapsed and died after writing to us.

Our hopes were raised again on the 27th when Robert wrote reporting good progress and asking for melons, but on the 28th a long telegram from the Army Council confirmed his death. This seemed final, but I refused to give up hope, and at 10.30 p.m. we set off for London to enquire the source of the telegram at the Officers' Casualties Office in Parliament Street. Here we learnt that it had come from the front, and not from the hospital. It was now long after midnight, but, borrowing the money from a kind official, we sent a prepaid wire to Rouen.

A further letter came from Robert next day dated the 25th, in which he spoke of eating and sleeping well and said that his heart, which had been forced out of place, was becoming normal.

On the 31st a letter stating definitely that he had died of wounds and that his personal belongings were being sent home. This news was crushing. I took a last look at the letter and found to my joy that it had, after all, not come from the hospital, but from his soldier servant at the front. Our suspense was ended by a wire from Rouen. 'Captain Graves progressing favourably transferred England shortly.' Once more only were we told officially of Robert's death, in *The Times* of August 3rd, but there was no further cause for fear, for he had by now been transferred to an English hospital and pointed out his own name in the Casualty list to his mother, as having died of wounds.

The first two doctors who had seen him had thought his case hopeless. The second of these, wanting his

place in the clearing station for a more hopeful case, sent him off to the base hospital. 'You'll be all right,' he said, and Robert believed him.

He was still regarded as a hopeless case when he wrote his first letter home in the train. The journey to Rouen he has himself described as a nightmare, and for some years after the war he was unable to go in any train without feeling violently sick.

Parts of this account do not quite tally with Robert's own version. Mine may, however, be taken as more correct, since I have transcribed it from the diary which I kept from day to day throughout the war.

Goodbye to All That calls for many more corrections than I can here enumerate, having been written largely from memory, sometimes from hearsay, and often long after the events described. For example my first wife's family, the Coopers, had been Tuthills, and only changed their name to Cooper after the Napoleonic Wars in the time of Janie's grandfather. In any case the brutal story of Ensign Cooper and Moira O'Brien need not have been introduced. He describes my grandfather, the chief Commissioner of Police for Dublin, as a parson. He gives me no credit for the interest I always felt and showed in his poetry. During the War I offered poems of his to editor after editor, and even arranged with Harold Munro of the Poetry Book Shop to whom I introduced Robert, for the publication of *Over the Brazier*. Again, he attributes the fuss made when my sister-in-law Grace Pontifex came to see us at Wimbledon to snobbery. Anyone who knew Grace Pontifex would

realize that her very Irish combination of ferocious, if humorous candour, personal charm and good looks were more than enough to cause a pleasant flutter when she arrived. Finally I may say that his estimate of his Grandfather Graves, founded on Limerick gossip, gathered while he was soldiering there, is an unfair one. What he really was, I have endeavoured to show in the course of this autobiography, with the assistance of the late Archbishop Alexander.

CHAPTER XX

CONCLUSION

Lecturing to Australian Troops at Wilton after the war – Further lectures to troops in Ireland – Visit to Boyle Abbey – A visit to Mitchelstoun Castle – Savage Club Recollections – Work as a playwright and organizer of Harlech Pageants – Brief records of my children – Conclusion.

When hostilities had ceased I was invited by the War Office to follow the addresses I had been giving for the Y.M.C.A. by a lecture tour among the troops. First I visited the Australians at Wilton, where my fellow-lecturers were Messrs. Gay and Gabb. The *padre* Gay had been given the first place, and he discoursed effectively for three-quarters of an hour on Dickens, with a cigarette in his mouth, which he said had become a necessity to him on these occasions. I thought it hard that I should have to come on immediately after him and, as the heat was stifling, was quite prepared for the Aussies to go out for a breather. But no; they sat sternly awaiting me. I did my best to be as lively as possible on the subject of Irish Humour, and when the lecture was over several of the men came up and clapped me on the shoulder with 'Well done, Dad!' But, however great

his gift, I trembled for poor Gabb, for whose lecture they almost all remained. Fortunately his work largely consisted in acting the show-man through the streets of Rome, of which he had a number of magnificent lantern slides, so he came off victoriously, too.

After a course of lectures to the Australians I was sent to Ireland, where I was called upon at the age of seventy-three to deliver forty-eight lectures in six weeks. This I only contrived to do by accepting whatever conveyance came my way. A motor-cyclist, in whose side-car I had a long journey to make, surprised me by his erratic cornering. 'You don't seem very familiar with these roads,' I ventured politely. 'No,' he admitted, 'Fact is, I've only been at it for ten days and you're my first passenger.' 'Have you had any accidents?' 'Oh a few. Yesterday I got up on the back of a cow.'

This reminds me that I once saw 'Hair Cutting by Machinery' advertised by a London barber. It was a new idea to me, so I walked in and asked for a machine-cut. The operator seemed strangely pleased to see me. I settled into the chair under the machinery and was awaiting the experience with interest, when I heard a curious shuffling noise. Glancing round I saw the back of the room filling rapidly with people.

'I suppose I am not the first person to have his hair cut in this way?' I asked.

'Well sir, you are!'

'In that case,' I said as I rose to go, 'I shall also be the last,' a prophecy which seems to have been fulfilled.

When visiting Boyle Abbey, the local caretaker informed me that I had 'behaved well' when I wrote 'Father O'Flynn!'

In the large market square of Mitchelstown there is a monumental cross recording the deaths for Ireland of John Mandeville, and asking that Skellick, Casey and Lonergan, who fell along with him in 1888, may be remembered. The inscription is partly in English, partly in Irish; and in the latter respect it is, I should imagine, one of the earliest revivals on monumental crosses of the Irish language, though the date of its erection is not upon it.

The police, after arresting for sedition one or more of the speakers at a public meeting in the square, were attacked by the crowd, who succeeded in rescuing their prisoners. The constabulary, driven into barracks, fired out of the windows down the street, and killed the three men, Skellick, Casey and Lonergan.

Mr. Gladstone, misinformed as to the details of it, referred to the affair in one of his speeches in excitable terms, using the phrase for long afterwards current in Home Rule propaganda: 'Remember Mitchelstown!'

But I best remember Mitchelstown by its wonderful castle, once for its beauty and commodiousness talked of as a fitting royal residence for Queen Victoria. Here on my lecturing tour I was entertained by my connection Webber who had married my cousin, Lady Kingston. The castle contained a fine picture gallery in which was a striking portrait of the ex-Emperor William.

And yet in De Valera's rebellion the castle was ruthlessly destroyed and not only the castle but the local hospital. When I once lunched with Mr. Timothy Healy at the Vice-Regal Lodge he spoke with great and just indignation about these acts of vandalism.

I had written a play in the 'seventies *Out of the Frying Pan*, founded on a Danish original for Lionel Brough and Lottie Venn, which ran for over 200 nights at the Holborn and Globe Theatres.

This had brought me into the Savage Club whose wigwam was then in the Gordon Hotel, Covent Garden.

Its walls were covered with all kinds of savage trophies, and a long table ran down the middle of it at which we sat for our good simple five o'clock dinners, a pleasant medley of authors and actors, composers and artists, singers, entertainers, lecturers and pressmen.

When our early meal was over the fun began, glasses were filled, pipes lit, and we sat listening to the leading wits and humorists of our day, Robertson and Henry Byron, Harry Leigh and Johnny Toole. Even now I seem to hear old Grossmith, the father of George and Weedon, giving one of his killing dog-German lectures, and what a relief to him after his day as a reporter in Bow Street police station. Then, for it was a Grossmith evening, George and Weedon had a violent quarrel, and fought it out to the life, and then fell suddenly into each other's arms, after which George went to the piano and sang his own song, 'I

am so Versatile,' as he alone could sing it, after he had manipulated the keys to sound like violin strings. One final memory.

A famous entertainer, MacCabe, after singing his version of 'Begone, dull care!' put his head up the chimney – it was in summer time – and got into conversation with a sweep, supposed to have stuck there – it was the funniest piece of ventriloquism I ever listened to.

Later on I became dramatic critic of the *Examiner*, and when thus engaged was in close touch with Henry Irving and the Batemans, James Albery and William and Freeman Wills. I also collaborated with Dr. Westland Marston, with whom and his son Philip Bourke Marston and his sisters I was on very friendly terms. Years afterwards I wrote an operetta with Commendatore Esposito, which was successfully played, and a three-act comedy, *The Absentee*, which was produced at the Court Theatre. Finally I realised that Harlech Castle, famous for its two sieges and its song of 'The Men of Harlech' would form an admirable setting for an historical pageant; so I set to work to bring this about.

Episodes from its history were accordingly written by Mr. Ernest Rhys, Sir John Morris Jones, Professor J. E. Lloyd, Mr. Turberville, Mr. Patrick Kirwan, and myself and our project took practical form.

The pageant was first acted in 1920 and was handsomely supported by Lord and Lady Howard de Walden, who took part in it and helped with dresses and armour, even bringing their own falcons for a

mediæval scene. Our producer was Mr. Kirwan, and under his clever coaching distinct talent was developed among the local actors. All classes and creeds were represented. Nonconformists were ready to act as Churchmen, and one of them enrolled recruits for the first crusade with the sign of the cross. Aberystwyth supplied a good orchestra, and Harlech choirs sang their beautiful Welsh folk-songs.

Mr. Kirwan produced the pageant for us again in 1922 when the harp was introduced, played by Mrs. Wheldon of Bangor. In the third pageant of 1927, which was under the capable control of Mr. Morris Davies of Leominster, Welsh folk-dancing found a place together with fine solo dances by Miss Joyce Peters and Miss Barbara Holbrooke, whose father Mr. Josef Holbrooke was Master of the Music. All three pageants were artistic successes, and presided over by Lord Howard de Walden, the Archbishop of Wales, Mr. Lloyd George, the Welsh Arch-Druid and others.

Before closing, let me bring my family history up to date.

Philip, after obtaining an Oxford scholarship, took up journalism in Egypt, acted for many years as *The Times* Correspondent at Constantinople, and served with distinction in Egypt and Palestine during the War. Recently he has been working in the Foreign Department of *The Times* in London. He has also paid special visits for *The Times* to Ireland and India to report on the boundary and Swaraj questions. His chief hobby is entomology, and he has written a book on Palestine, *The Land of Three Faiths*.

Mary, or Molly, who has the gift of water-finding, became a professional gardener after being trained at Swanley Horticultural College and Glasnevin Botanical Gardens in Dublin, where she was one of the first women to take the course. She married Arthur S. Preston, an Egyptian advocate, now a judge in the Mixed Courts at Cairo, and has two children living.

Richard, like Philip, was head of Haileybury under Dr. Lyttleton. He was a Demy of Magdalen and later obtained a Student-Interpretership at Constantinople. He was transferred to Egypt and not long before the War was seconded to the Egyptian Civil Service, in which he has remained.

Perceval, whose full name is the same as mine, which has caused not a few misunderstandings, has been a world-roamer. He was articled to a London solicitor, but has practised as far east as Rangoon and as far west as British Columbia. When he was younger he was the playboy of the family, and my wife once had to rack her brains for a joke to explain her burst of laughter when a parson whom Perceval had mimicked to the life came to tea and was himself. He married Miss Gwen Knight, the singer, and is engaged in publicity work.

Susan, after teaching in a High School, married Kenneth Macaulay and went with him to Egypt, where his work lay. After the war, he obtained a post in the Ministry of Transport, and they now live in Surrey.

Clarissa, the eldest of my second family, took up art and went through the Slade School. Latterly she

studied English at Manchester University and is now in the Speech Training Department of the London Polytechnic. She recently published *Seven Days and other Poems.*

Rosaleen took her A.R.C.M., but after the war she wished to become a doctor and went up to Oxford, where she gained a Medical degree and had a book of verse *Night Sounds* published. She is now in general practice in London, but has not lost her love for music, and is as keen as ever on folk-songs, of which she has collected a number and arranged not a few to my words.

As a small boy Charles had intended to be a sailor. 'What will you do?' asked his mother. 'I s'pose I'll toss,' he replied, thinking of the lines:

'Guard the sailors tossing
On the deep blue sea.'

But after editing the *Isis* at Oxford, where he read English, he went into Fleet Street. Lately he married Miss Margaret Leigh, daughter of the Hon. Rowland Leigh, and is on the Editorial staff of the *Daily Mail.*

John, my youngest son, was foiled in his early ambition to become a tram-conductor. After reading 'Greats' at Oxford, he took up schoolmastering and is now teaching Classics at Sandroyd School and playing football for the Casuals and Old Carthusians. His help and Philip's in re-arranging and condensing this book have been invaluable.

I still hope to live for many years to come, belonging as I do to a family of centenarians, and must apologise for writing this book at the comparatively early age of

eighty-three. But a song I once wrote is already regarded by some as an Elizabethan lyric, so the publication of this volume is perhaps not premature, and modern critics, who encourage youngsters to write off their lives at thirty-three, may even think me fifty years too late.

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